

Hoover Hotel

SECRET

**HISTORY
Of The
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WITH SELECTED DOCUMENTS**

January 22, 1944 - September 15, 1945

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
War Refugee Board

THE INDEX TO THE "HISTORY OF THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD"
APPEARS AT THE BEGINNING OF VOLUME I.

DOCUMENT

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, London
DATED: June 15, 1944
NUMBER: 4753

CONFIDENTIAL

From War Refugee Board to Ambassador Winant, in London.

Please refer to your 4556 of June 7.

We are gratified that the British Government has agreed to the establishment of a refugee camp in Tripolitania capable of accommodating between 1000 and 1500 persons. Please convey the Board's appreciation to the Foreign Office.

The Board now awaits British suggestions as to the practical measures required for the joint establishment of the refugee camp in Tripolitania. It is assumed that we shall be advised in the immediate future of the exact location of the proposed camp, together with a detailed description of what is necessary and the time required to put the camp in condition to receive refugees.

With regard to the question of medical and administrative personnel one possibility is to request UNRRA to administer the camp as in the case of Camp Lyautey. If this is acceptable to the British, we shall be glad to approach the UNRRA representatives in Washington on this matter.

Because of the large numbers of refugees arriving daily in Southern Italy from Yugoslavia, the question of havens is particularly urgent at the present time. It is therefore hoped that the Tripolitania refugee project will now move forward with maximum speed. Please urge the British to furnish us as quickly as possible with the details requested above.

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Mission, Algiers
DATED: June 8, 1944
NUMBER: 1823

SECRET

From the President to Ambassador Robert Murphy, Algiers.

Information available to me indicates that there are real possibilities of saving human lives by bringing more refugees through Yugoslavia to southern Italy. I am also informed that the escape of refugees by this route has from time to time been greatly impeded because the facilities in southern Italy for refugees have been overtaxed. I am advised that this is the situation at the present moment and that accordingly possibilities of increasing the flow of refugees to Italy may be lost.

I understand that many of the refugees in southern Italy have been and are being moved to temporary havens in areas adjacent to the Mediterranean and that efforts are being made to increase existing refugee facilities in these areas. I am most anxious that this effort to take refugees from Italy to areas relatively close by be intensified.

At the same time I feel that it is important that the United States indicate that it is ready to share the burden of caring for refugees during the war. Accordingly, I have decided that approximately 1,000 refugees should be immediately brought from Italy to this country, to be placed in an Emergency Refugee Shelter to be established at Fort Ontario near Oswego, New York, where under appropriate security restrictions they will remain for the duration of the war. These refugees will be brought into this country outside of the regular immigration procedure just as civilian internees from Latin American countries and prisoners of war have been brought here. The Emergency Refugee Shelter will be well equipped to take good care of these people. It is contemplated that at the end of the war they will be returned to their homelands.

You may assume that the Emergency Refugee Shelter will be ready to receive these refugees when they arrive. I will appreciate it therefore if you will arrange for the departure to the United States as rapidly as possible, consistent with military requirements, of approximately 1,000 refugees in southern Italy. You may call upon representatives of the War Refugee Board in Algiers to assist you in this matter. The full cooperation of our military and naval authorities should be enlisted in effecting the prompt removal and transportation

of the refugees.

In choosing the refugees to be brought to the United States, please bear in mind that to the extent possible those refugees should be selected for whom other havens of refuge are not immediately available. I should however like the group to include a reasonable proportion of various categories of persecuted peoples who have fled to Italy.

However, please be sure that the necessary health checks are made to avoid bringing here persons afflicted with any loathsome, dangerous or contagious disease.

You should bear in mind that since these refugees are to be placed in a camp in the United States under appropriate security restrictions, the procedure for the selection of the refugees and arrangements for bringing them here should be as simple and expeditious as possible, uncomplicated by any of the usual formalities involved in admitting people to the United States under the immigration laws.

If you encounter any difficulties in arranging for the prompt departure of these refugees please let me know.

For Kirk's attention the foregoing was repeated to Naples.

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June 8, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary of War
Secretary of Navy
Secretary of Interior
Director of Budget
Executive Director of the War Refugee Board

There is attached a cable which I have dispatched to Robert Murphy in Algiers, requesting that he make arrangements for the departure to the United States as rapidly as possible of approximately 1,000 refugees now in southern Italy.

These refugees will be brought into this country outside of the regular immigration procedure and placed in Fort Ontario near Oswego, New York. While the War Refugee Board is charged with the overall responsibility for this project, the Army shall take the necessary security precautions so that these refugees will remain in the camp and the actual administration of the camp is to be in the hands of the War Relocation Authority.

Accordingly, the following steps should be taken as expeditiously as possible:

(1) The War Department and the Navy Department shall send whatever instructions are necessary to the military authorities in Italy and North Africa to expedite the transportation of these refugees to the United States.

(2) The War Department shall arrange to furnish and properly equip Fort Ontario to receive these refugees; shall arrange for their transportation from the port of arrival to the camp; and shall arrange for the necessary security precautions.

(3) The War Relocation Authority shall make arrangements to handle the actual administration of the camp, which will be designated as an Emergency Refugee Shelter.

(4) Until UNRRA is in a position to assume the financial responsibilities involved, the Bureau of the Budget shall make arrangements for financing the project; using to the extent possible any available funds of the War Department, the War Relocation Authority, and the War Refugee Board, and from the Foreign War Relief appropriation, and if necessary drawing upon the President's Emergency Fund.

(Signed)
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Attachment.

DOCUMENT

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June 12, 1944

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Congress has repeatedly manifested its deep concern with the pitiful plight of the persecuted minorities in Europe whose lives are each day being offered in sacrifice on the altar of Nazi tyranny.

This Nation is appalled by the systematic persecution of helpless minority groups by the Nazis. To us the unprovoked murder of innocent people simply because of race, religion or political creed is the blackest of all possible crimes. Since the Nazis began this campaign many of our citizens in all walks of life and of all political and religious persuasions have expressed our feeling of repulsion and our anger. It is a matter with respect to which there is and can be no division of opinion amongst us.

As the hour of the final defeat of the Hitlerite forces draws closer, the fury of their insane desire to wipe out the Jewish race in Europe continues undiminished. This is but one example: Many Christian groups also are being murdered. Knowing that they have lost the war, the Nazis are determined to complete their program of mass extermination. This program is but one manifestation of Hitler's aim to salvage from military defeat victory for Nazi principles - the very principles which this war must destroy unless we shall have fought in vain.

This Government has not only made clear its abhorrence of this inhuman and barbarous activity of the Nazis, but, in cooperation with other governments has endeavored to alleviate the condition of the persecuted peoples. In January of this year I determined that this Government should intensify its efforts to combat the Nazi terror. Accordingly, I established the War Refugee Board, composed of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War. This Board was charged with the responsibility of taking all action consistent with the successful prosecution of the war to rescue the victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of death and to afford such victims all other possible relief and assistance. It was entrusted with the solemn duty of translating this Government's humanitarian policy into prompt action, thus manifesting once again in a concrete way that our kind of world and not Hitler's will prevail. Its purpose is directly and closely related to our whole war effort.

Since its establishment, the War Refugee Board, acting through a full time administrative staff, has made a direct and forceful attack on the problem. Operating quietly, as is appropriate, the Board, through its representatives in various parts of the world, has actually succeeded in saving the lives of innocent people. Not only have refugees been

evacuated from enemy territory, but many measures have been taken to protect the lives of those who have not been able to escape.

Above all, the efforts of the Board have brought new hope to the oppressed peoples of Europe. This statement is not idle speculation. From various sources, I have received word that thousands of people, wearied by their years of resistance to Hitler and by their sufferings to the point of giving up the struggle, have been given the will and desire to continue by the concrete manifestation of this Government's desire to do all possible to aid and rescue the oppressed.

To the Hitlerites, their subordinates and functionaries and satellites, to the German people and to all other peoples under the Nazi yoke, we have made clear our determination to punish all participants in these acts of savagery. In the name of humanity we have called upon them to spare the lives of these innocent people.

Notwithstanding this Government's unremitting efforts, which are continuing, the numbers actually rescued from the jaws of death have been small compared with the numbers still facing extinction in German territory. This is due principally to the fact that our enemies, despite all our appeals and our willingness to find havens of refuge for the oppressed peoples, persist in their fiendish extermination campaign and actively prevent the intended victims from escaping to safety.

In the face of this attitude of our enemies we must not fail to take full advantage of any opportunity, however limited, for the rescue of Hitler's victims. We are confronted with a most urgent situation.

Therefore, I wish to report to you today concerning a step which I have just taken in an effort to save additional lives and which I am certain will meet with your approval. You will, I am sure, appreciate that this measure is not only consistent with the successful prosecution of the war, but that it was essential to take action without delay.

Even before the Allied landing in Italy there had been a substantial movement of persecuted peoples of various races and nationalities into that country. This movement was undoubtedly prompted by the fact that, despite all attempts by the Fascists to stir up intolerance, the warm-hearted Italian people could not forsake their centuries-old tradition of tolerance and humanitariansim. The Allied landings swelled this stream of fleeing and hunted peoples seeking sanctuary behind the guns of the United Nations. However, in view of the military situation in Italy, the number of refugees who can be accommodated there is relatively limited. The Allied military forces, in view of their primary responsibility, have not been able generally speaking to encourage the escape of refugees from enemy territory. This unfortunate situation

has prevented the escape of the largest possible number of refugees. Furthermore, as the number of refugees living in southern Italy increases, their care constitutes an additional and substantial burden for the military authorities.

Recently the facilities for the care of refugees in southern Italy have become so overtaxed that unless many refugees who have already escaped to that area and are arriving daily, particularly from the Balkan countries, can be promptly removed to havens of refuge elsewhere, the escape of refugees to that area from German occupied territory will be seriously impeded. It was apparent that prompt action was necessary to meet this situation. Many of the refugees in southern Italy have been and are being moved to temporary refuges in the territory of other United and friendly nations. However, in view of the number of refugees still in southern Italy, the problem could not be solved unless temporary havens of refuge were found for some of them in still other areas. In view of this most urgent situation it seemed indispensable that the United States in keeping with our heritage and our ideals of liberty and justice take immediate steps to share the responsibility for meeting the problem.

Accordingly, arrangements have been made to bring immediately to this country approximately 1,000 refugees who have fled from their homelands to southern Italy. Upon the termination of the war they will be sent back to their homelands. These refugees are predominantly women and children. They will be placed on their arrival in a vacated Army camp on the Atlantic Coast where they will remain under appropriate security restrictions.

The Army will take the necessary security precautions and the camp will be administered by the War Relocation Authority. The War Refugee Board is charged with overall responsibility for this project.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

June 12, 1944

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UNITED STATES SENATE

June 14, 1944.

Hon. Francis Biddle,
The Attorney General,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Attorney General:

It has come to my attention through the columns of the press and through a message to Congress by the President that the President has authorized the setting aside of the immigration laws insofar as immigration quotas are concerned and insofar as refugees are permitted to enter this country. I refer to the proposed free port for refugees and the proposed occupation of abandoned military areas for the use of refugees.

Will you please be good enough to advise me as to just what ground the President based his authority to set aside the aforementioned laws permitting refugees or anyone else to enter this country outside of our quotas or in violation of any of our present immigration statutes.

With assurances of my highest esteem, and thanking you for your prompt attention to this matter, I am

Faithfully yours,

(Signed)
ROBERT R. REYNOLDS

Robert R. Reynolds, U. S. S.

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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 23, 1944

Honorable Robert R. Reynolds
Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Chairman:

I have received your letter dated June 14, 1944, in which you ask to be advised of the basis of the President's authority for his recent announcement that 1,000 refugees now in Italy would be brought to this country and detained in a special camp.

These refugees will not be permitted to enter the United States under the immigration laws and thereby to obtain any rights to be at liberty in the United States or to remain here. The proposal, therefore, does not involve setting aside the immigration statutes. The propriety of temporarily detaining aliens in this country outside of the requirements of the immigration laws has been recognized for many years. One of the earliest instances of this practice occurred in the Russo-Japanese war when the crews of Russian war vessels were interned in the United States outside of the regular procedure under the immigration statutes. A recent illustration of the practice is afforded by the case of the German, Italian and Japanese nationals who have been deported by Latin American countries to the United States under an arrangement whereby they are interned in this country and will ultimately be repatriated to their own countries. Similarly, prisoners of war brought here for custody do not enter under the immigration laws and they obtain no right to remain here or to be at liberty within the country. For obvious reasons, this is a practice that can be followed only in exceptional circumstances.

For your convenience, I enclose a copy of the President's message to the Congress, dated June 12, 1944, which indicates that the present proposal relates to a particular group of persons who are now a burden to our military forces in an active theater of war operations and that military necessity requires some temporary disposition of them. It may be pointed out that as an emergency matter these persons might be permitted to enter the United States under the immigration laws by waivers of documents by the Secretary of State and, if necessary, by waiver of grounds of inadmissibility by the Attorney General. It was believed more desirable, however, not to apply the immigration laws, which create various rights and privileges, but to deal with this group

as we have with the prisoners of war and other Axis nationals who are admitted to this country temporarily and detained here outside, but not in violation of, the immigration laws.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
FRANCIS BIDDLE
Attorney General

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 12, 1944

Dear Mr. Myer:

As you know, both the War Refugee Board and the War Relocation Authority have received many recent inquiries on the subject of the availability of the refugees at Fort Ontario, Oswego, for emergency seasonal employment. As I understand the situation, the farmers in the neighborhood as well as local public officials have indicated the acute and urgent need of emergency help in order to prevent the spoilage of important food crops that are currently being harvested and processed.

After giving careful consideration to the matter, we have reached the following conclusions:

1. Whenever a general emergency exists and whenever the failure to provide labor will result in demonstrable injury to the war effort, we feel that the refugees should have an opportunity voluntarily to assist in harvesting and processing food crops under appropriate security controls.
2. The recruitment of refugees for emergency work should be done through the properly accredited agencies in the vicinity.
3. In each instance every effort should be made to insure that a real emergency exists and that the refugees are not being used to replace or compete with the normal labor supply in the area.
4. We believe that the refugees should return to the shelter every night during this present emergency employment.

Sincerely yours,

J. W. PEHLE
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Dillon Myer, Director
War Relocation Authority
Barr Building
Washington, D. C.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 6, 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

The liberation of Europe has terminated the specific task assigned to the War Refugee Board to rescue and bring relief to the persecuted peoples in Europe in imminent danger of death at the hands of the Nazis. The Board is now in process of winding up all its activities and it is contemplated that this will be completed by August 30, 1945.

There remains, however, one difficult problem which arises from the over-all responsibility given the Board for the Oswego project. Because of the complexity of this problem I have set forth my views and recommendations on this matter in a separate memorandum which I herewith send to you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

The principal remaining problem confronting the War Refugee Board arises in connection with the Oswego project. In his directive of June 8, 1944, and in his message to Congress of June 12, 1944, President Roosevelt charged the Board with "the over-all responsibility for this project" and the War Relocation Authority with the actual administration of the camp.

There are two essentially different problems in connection with the people at Oswego. First, there is the problem of their relocation, which is an integral part of the larger problem of the ultimate resettlement of perhaps millions of permanently displaced persons the world over, particularly in Europe. Second, there is the problem of the modification of the restrictive conditions which keep the refugees confined to the Shelter at Oswego.

The President's message of June 12, 1944, to the Congress has an important bearing on the first problem. Advising the Congress that he had made arrangements to bring about 1,000 refugees in Southern Italy to the United States, the President stated that "upon termination of the war they will be sent back to their homelands." If it were possible now that the war in Europe is ended to immediately carry out the President's commitment, the second problem would not arise.

It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that relatively few of the people at Oswego can be returned to homelands at the present time. The statement of only a few summary facts and statistics relating to the refugees at Oswego is necessary to support this general conclusion.

Although every effort is being made to return as many as possible, so far we have succeeded in returning only 14 persons.

Of the 982 who came to Oswego, 369 were citizens of Yugoslavia, the only country to which repatriation is as yet possible. Only 13 Yugoslavs were willing to depart on the May 31st sailing of the Gripsholm, although there was no question of their nationality and their government was willing to receive them. In February of this year 111 of the Yugoslavs had indicated their desire to return to their homeland, but when it came to a test of their actual departure only a few volunteered to go. The reluctance or unwillingness of the Yugoslavs to return has to do, in so far as we know, with political considerations or a desire to obtain permanent entry into the United States.

There are at Oswego, 41 Czechs and 146 Poles; 2 of the Czechs and 76 of the Poles are or consider themselves "stateless". Almost all of these 146 persons have indicated a desire to remain in the United States. It is practically impossible to know the extent to which their hope of obtaining permanent entry to this country is responsible for their unwillingness to return to their countries of origin. There is no indication that even those with clear citizenship could at present be returned or that their governments would receive them.

The largest single category of refugees at Oswego are "stateless" Jews. There are 361 persons originating in Austria, Germany and the Balkan countries, practically all in this category. The problem of these people, and perhaps of the "stateless" Poles, is far from an ultimate solution. Under present physical, psychological and political conditions they have no homelands to which to return. Almost none of them want to return and almost all of them wish to remain in the United States.

There are 65 additional people at Oswego, of whom 16 are "stateless" Russians and 45 citizens of Allied countries other than Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

The above facts make it clear that the great majority of the refugees at Oswego either do not now have "homelands", in fact or in their own consideration, or do not voluntarily wish to return to their national homes. In my opinion, it would not be in accordance with the President's commitment and our government's political and humanitarian policies, to return "stateless" Jews arbitrarily to Germany and Austria or unwilling nationals to the countries of their citizenship. Furthermore, conditions in Europe at present preclude the possibility of the immediate return of many of the people at Oswego and, more generally, the resettlement of most displaced persons. Finally our national policies with respect to displaced persons should be determined and developed in proper relation to a United Nations solution of the problem. In the meantime every effort should be made to settle as many of the refugees in Oswego in permanent homes, anywhere in the world where they can and are willing to go.

To return these people to Italy on the formal consideration that this was the country from which they were shipped to Oswego, in my opinion, would not be in accordance with the President's commitment. Such action would undoubtedly prejudice the action of other countries with large numbers of refugees, particularly the neutrals whom we urged to accept as many as possible while we were at war with Germany. It would not be in accordance with the objectives and ideals which motivated President Roosevelt to bring these people to a safe haven in the United States. The arbitrary

return of these people to Italy would only serve the purpose of getting them out of the United States to some UNRRA camp where they might have to wait for years before final relocation.

I therefore recommend that, until such time as the United States Government policy with respect to the more general United Nations problem of the ultimate resettlement of permanently displaced persons, including those at Oswego and elsewhere in the United States, is definitely determined, the refugees at Oswego be allowed to remain in the United States, except in those cases where they are willing and able to return to countries to which repatriation can be effected.

If the people at Oswego cannot or will not be immediately returned to Europe, we can expect the intensification of public efforts to obtain the modification of the restrictive conditions which keep them confined to the Shelter at Oswego. Innumerable complaints and criticisms have been received by the Board from private agencies, members of Congress, private citizens and the refugees themselves. The director of the camp, Mr. Joseph Smart, recently resigned in protest against the continued confinement of the refugees and is organizing public opinion and action to obtain greater freedom for them. Daily there are newspaper accounts highlighting the mental and physical tensions of the refugees, their inactivity, and their separation "by bars" from close relatives who are citizens of the United States. The people of the town of Oswego under the leadership of their mayor have recently petitioned the President to release the refugees. The House Committee on Immigration is about to conduct an investigation at Oswego.

The basic reasons for confining the refugees to a camp were the need for security restrictions during the war, their contemplated return home immediately after the war; and the fact that, since they were here outside the immigration laws, criticism of any permission to leave the camp "might affect the efforts of this Government to rescue additional groups of refugees and also post war immigration generally", as stated by Attorney General Biddle.

Security reasons are no longer controlling and it seems unlikely that they can be returned in the immediate future. Furthermore, with the end of the war in Europe, there is no further need to rescue additional refugees. If these people are to remain in this country until they are permanently relocated, it is difficult to see how general policy considerations with respect to post war immigration can withstand the humanitarian considerations underlying the increasing public pressure to grant the Oswego refugees greater freedom while in the United States.

During the past few months I have repeatedly tried to obtain permission from the Attorney General for the extended leave from Oswego under appropriate control of those refugees who are in imminent danger of nervous or physical breakdowns and possibly for all of the refugees as a preventive measure. The Attorney General consistently has refused to grant such approval because of President Roosevelt's statement to the Congress that these refugees would remain in a camp under appropriate security restrictions until returned to their homelands upon termination of the war, and because the temporary release of any of the refugees might affect public and Congressional attitudes with respect to existing immigration laws, policies and procedures. At present, no refugee may leave Oswego other than for 6 hours a day except for necessary hospitalization. In my opinion these refugees can and should be granted greater freedom in a manner consonant with the fact that they are here outside the immigration laws.

I therefore recommend that, while the refugees at Oswego remain in this country pending solution of their ultimate resettlement, they should be allowed greater freedom, under a general program of sponsored leave consistent with the broad humanitarian ideals that motivated this Government in bringing these people to the United States and with the conditions of American freedom surrounding them. The details and conditions of such a program should be worked out by the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice.

Since it is contemplated that the War Refugee Board will be terminated not later than August 31, 1945, and since the solution of the problems of the people at Oswego requires considerable time beyond that date, I recommend that the over-all responsibility for the Oswego project should be transferred immediately from the War Refugee Board to the Department of the Interior, which has the actual administration of the camp.

WILLIAM O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

February 27, 1945

My dear General O'Dwyer:

After careful consideration of all factors involved, I should like to urge strongly the initiation of a program of sponsored leave which will permit residents of the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, who desire to do so, to reside in normal communities throughout the United States. In my opinion, such a policy might well be put into effect within the next thirty days, unless there are valid reasons which you consider make such a course undesirable.

Of the 982 persons of all ages and various nationalities residing at the Shelter, many have close relatives in the United States--children, parents, brothers, and sisters, and even husbands and wives. Twenty sons of Shelter residents are in the United States Army. In Italy, before coming to this country, many of the refugees were at work and all enjoyed considerable freedom of movement.

We have done our utmost to administer the Shelter humanely, but six months of residence under conditions substantially more restrictive than those under which these people lived abroad have inevitably resulted in disappointment and frustration. The Shelter residents grow increasingly bitter and resentful over what is virtually confinement under an indeterminate sentence and cannot understand why they as friends of the United States should not be free in a land of freedom. They compare their treatment, and unfavorably, with that accorded internees and prisoners of war. They would like to contribute to the winning of the war, but instead are denied the opportunity for productive enterprise. I have felt for some time that it is scarcely to be tolerated that these avowed anti-Nazi refugees should be forced to live in the United States under this form of detention.

The extremely rigorous climate at Fort Ontario is another factor contributing to their physical and mental discomfort and rendering more difficult our task of maintaining the refugees at a minimum standard of decency.

Apart from these considerations, I can see no justification for maintaining the refugees at Fort Ontario at public expense, when relatives and friends of the refugees and private agencies are willing and eager to assume full responsibility for their care.

We recognize that the refugees at Fort Ontario were brought into the United States outside the immigration laws, but believe

that the policy of sponsored leave outlined below would not conflict with the government's declaration concerning the status of the refugees in this country.

I propose that the following policies govern the issuance of sponsored leave.

1. Refugees would apply to the War Relocation Authority for permission to take up residence outside the Shelter for an indefinite period. They would be informed that such residence is subject to termination at any time, and that they would be required to return to Fort Ontario or to a designated place when the government concludes arrangements for their return to their homelands.
2. The War Relocation Authority now has general assurance and would require specific assurance from cooperating national private agencies that for each person granted sponsored leave these agencies would assume the following responsibilities:
 - (a) Provide transportation and incidental expenses from Fort Ontario to the new location and return to any designated place within the United States.
 - (b) Relieve the government of any financial responsibility for refugees on sponsored leave during the period of such leave. In instances where the agencies arrange for a relative or friend to assume responsibility in an individual case, the agencies would agree to carry on the responsibility for maintenance and other services if the relative or friend should at any time be unable to live up to his obligations.
 - (c) Reunite refugees with their relatives in this country wherever possible.
 - (d) Arrange for a reputable private citizen or local agency to serve as sponsor for the refugee in the community where he takes up residence.
 - (e) Meet any other security provisions required by the government.
 - (f) Arrange through local cooperating agencies and private individuals for refugees to obtain adequate housing, welfare, medical, and other services and, where possible, constructive employment.
3. Refugees on sponsored leave would be permitted to accept employment.

4. The War Relocation Authority would arrange to have refugees on sponsored leave or their sponsors notify the WRA Relocation Officer of the district in which they are residing of their present address once every thirty days.
5. Before departure from the Shelter, arrangements would be made with the Department of Justice for the registration of those applicants for sponsored leave who are technically aliens of enemy nationality, with the understanding that such persons, in the communities to which they go, would be subject to the same controls as residents of the United States who fall into this category. If desired by the Department of Justice, alien registration could also be accomplished for all persons granted sponsored leave.
6. The War Relocation Authority would institute a proper system of pass issuance so that each refugee departing on sponsored leave would be provided with a suitable identification card. Appropriate procedures would be developed so that the War Relocation Authority would know at any time the present address and agency or individual responsible for each of the refugees on sponsored leave.

The refugees were checked before their departure from Europe, and after their arrival at the Shelter were subjected to thorough screening and panelling by the United States Army. In view of the fact that no positive information of significance was developed concerning any of the group in these interviews and that none has developed out of our experience with them, it is believed that further processing of this sort should not constitute a prerequisite to the granting of sponsored leave.

Although it is anticipated that the national private agencies would be in a position to arrange sponsored leaves for all Shelter residents desiring to leave the Shelter, the War Relocation Authority would, of course, plan to continue operation of the Shelter for such period and on such scale as might be necessary.

It is my belief that such a program should be put into effect at an early date, provided that the policy is believed to be a sound one. I would appreciate having your reaction to this proposal as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
HAROLD L. ICKES

Harold L. Ickes
Secretary of the Interior

Gen. William O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board.

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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
WASHINGTON

March 1, 1945

General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D. C.

My dear General O'Dwyer:

The Secretary of the Interior has sent me a copy of his letter to you recommending the adoption of a program that would permit residents of the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, who desire to do so "to reside in normal communities throughout the United States."

I am opposed to this recommendation. These refugees did not enter the United States under the immigration laws; they were brought here apart from, but not in violation of, those laws. They came here on the understanding that they were not to be at liberty in the United States and that they were not to remain here permanently. On a number of occasions, when the question has arisen, I have assured members of Congress that the admission of these refugees did not give them any right to be at liberty here or to remain permanently in the United States, and that they would be detained in a refugee settlement until they could be safely returned to their homelands. I think the same representations were implicit in the message that the President sent to Congress dated June 12, 1944. The plan proposed by the Secretary of the Interior, in my opinion, is not consistent with the representations that the executive branch of the government has made to Congress. I think I should tell you that last December, in connection with a related problem, I was instructed by the President to adhere strictly to these representations. Finally, I should like to point out that the criticism that would doubtless follow any disregard of our representations to Congress, or that might otherwise be caused by permitting these refugees even limited liberty in this country, would probably adversely affect the efforts of this government to rescue additional groups of refugees.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Secretary of the Interior.

Sincerely yours,

FRANCIS BIDDLE
Attorney General

- 961 -

DOCUMENT

305

C
O
P
Y

June 6, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary of the Interior
Executive Director of the War
Refugee Board

In view of the contemplated early termination of the War
Refugee Board, the over-all responsibility for the Emergency
Refugee Shelter at Oswego, New York, is hereby transferred from
the War Refugee Board to the Department of the Interior.

(Signed)
HARRY TRUMAN

DOCUMENT

306

A I R G R A M

DISPATCHED: June 9, 1944.

CAIRO

FROM: American Embassy near
Government of Yugoslavia

DATE: June 6, 1944

RECEIVED: June 14, 8 a.m.

The Secretary of State
Washington.
A-21, June 7, 1 p.m., 1944.

With reference to the Department's telegram no. 1283 of May 27, 1944, 10 p.m., for Murphy from the War Refugee Board, I have obtained the following report from Mr. Matthews, Chief of the Balkan Mission of UNRRA, regarding the acceptance of further Yugoslav refugees in Egypt.

"On the first of January 1944 UNRRA was asked to accept responsibility for 20,000 Yugoslav refugees in the Middle East. The Egyptian Government agreed to accommodation in Egypt, and staff, supplies and services were made available by the British Army. Later the total ceiling of refugees was increased to 25,500. Up to the 1st of June some 26,000 refugees had actually arrived in Egypt. Camp space has provided no difficulty and sufficient stores are being made available to equip the camps. The British Army has been able to supply administrative personnel, but there has been great difficulty in providing sufficient transportation and it has been impossible to find adequate medical staff.

In the middle of May a request was received by UNRRA to take responsibility for further numbers of refugees, bringing the total ceiling up to 40,000. In view of the proposed take over of UNRRA by UNRRA as of May 1st, it was necessary to get UNRRA's Washington approval. This approval was forthcoming on condition that the Army would make available the necessary administrative and medical staff, supplies and other army services. This the Army agreed to do, but the actual shortage of doctors was such that sufficient staff could not be made available from army sources to enable refugees to be received. Until more doctors and nurses can be made available either from civilian or military sources in practice the limit of reception must stand at 40,000.

It may be assumed that no objection is likely to arise from the Egyptian Government to increases in the number of Yugoslav refugees accommodated in Egypt. The limit to reception of refugees is likely

to be set primarily by the availability of staff, especially of medical staff and also increasingly by the shortage of supplies. The British Army is no longer to make available E.P.I.P. tents for the expected arrivals and at an early date other supply shortages will make themselves apparent. With the increase of the number of refugees the transport position is also likely to cause considerable difficulty."

The Medical Division of UNRRA has also orally emphasized to this Embassy that the problems of obtaining sufficient medical, sanitation and nursing personnel, medical and sanitation supplies (especially the latter) as well as transportation and tents, at present preclude the acceptance by UNRRA of more than the 40,000 refugees specified by Mr. Matthews. It is further reported that the refugees now in Egypt, both adults and children, and the American and British workers among them have already, due to the lack of proper sanitation supplies, been exposed to unhealthful conditions, and that many refugees, especially children, are today suffering from various diseases brought about by these conditions.

The Medical Division further points out in this general connection that UNRRA's assumption of responsibility for these refugees was made conditional on its obtaining assistance in both personnel and supplies from the British and American Armies. The British Army has, it is said supplied with considerable difficulty a certain number of personnel and considerable supplies. On the other hand the American Army has advised that it has no authority to furnish either personnel or supplies for this purpose. Accordingly, it has been suggested that it would be of considerable assistance if the War Department were approached with a view to its authorizing USAFIME to furnish sanitation and medical supplies against payment, and also any personnel that may be available, if necessary such supplies being limited to only those not available from the British Army. If, in addition, the American Army could supply means of transportation and E.P.I.P. tents this would help the task of the UNRRA considerably. I understand that the USAFIME has already cabled Washington regarding these UNRRA requirements but has as yet received no directives.

A further question which has arisen is that of stateless refugees, since the Egyptian Government's regulations as to guarantees of repatriation after the war now prevent such persons being received in Egypt. Yugoslav Jews are not affected by this difficulty but I am informed that Jews of Hungarian and other enemy origin are classified by the Egyptians in this category and refused admission to camps here.

Repeated to Algiers for Murphy.

MACVEAGH

DOCUMENT

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 14, 1944
NUMBER: 4745

CONFIDENTIAL

There was mentioned yesterday in the DAILY MAIL and the TIMES the action of the American Government in establishing a refugee camp at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York as outlined in Department's message dated June 12 No. 4641, from the War Refugee Board. It is stated by the London office of OWI that it has been carrying the story in its broadcasts to enemy occupied and neutral countries and it has agreed to stress the significance of the President's action in opening this refugee camp.

On June 12 we discussed with Randall, head of the Refugee Department of the Foreign Office, the possible availability of Cyprus as a refugees haven. He said that the British Government had been informed by the governor of that territory that no more refugees could be accommodated because of the large number of Greek refugees who had fled to Cyprus. Randall felt that it would absolutely useless to look to Cyprus for assistance. It was stated by him that all possibilities were being considered by the British Government and he was trying to do everything in his power to find havens of refuge for those who can escape from German occupied areas.

During the course of the conversation with Randall on June 12, he referred to the fact that the British had agreed to the opening of a refugee camp in Tripolitani, as reported in Embassy's cable of June 7, No. 4556, and he expressed again the wish of the Foreign Office to receive suggestions from the War Refugee Board with respect to personnel and funds for this camp's administration.

WINANT

- 965 -

DOCUMENT

308

LC-458

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (Restricted)

Jerusalem

DATED: June 5, 1944
REC'D: 4:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
77, June 5, noon

Group of 769 Jewish immigrants arrived in Palestine via Egypt
on evening of June 2. 571 came from Italy on Polish steamer
"Batori" and 198 came from Yemen. Among those coming from Italy
were 192 Czechoslovaks, 178 Jugoslavs, 113 Poles and 56 Austrians,
largely from Ferramonte, Santa Maria and Bari concentration camps.

PINKERTON

DOCUMENT

309

RS-287

Distribution of true
reading only sy special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern

DATED: July 20, 1945
REC'D: 7:05 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
US URGENT
3632, July 20, 6 p.m.

FOR O'DWYER OF WRB FROM MCCLELLAND

Legation's 3560, July 14.

Swiss authorities informed me on July 16 that after reconsideration of whole question and in face of continued opposition on part of refugees themselves, Swiss now deem it undesirable evacuate groups B and C from Switzerland. Only group remaining, therefore, to be evacuated is A.

On July 14 AFHQ inquired whether these 700 (group A) destined for Palestine would be ready to move. Meanwhile through British Legation Bern and with assistance our Embassy London we have succeeded obtaining certain concessions such as permission use collective passports, calculated to speed up issuance certificates to this group in Switzerland. British security check will be transferred to their Consulate General in Naples.

With luck and perseverance I think we can get group A documented by end of this month. I accordingly suggested tentative departure date from Switzerland of August 6 to AFHQ and asked them if they planned make technical arrangements for picking up group at Swiss border and transporting it overland.

In view these developments it might be advisable postpone any approach to UNRRA for time being. Herbert should return to Switzerland with Harrison toward end this month. We will reexamine progress then and inform you.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

310

AIRGRAM

CIRCULAR AIRGRAM SENT

March 31, 1944
1:05 p.m.
SECRET BY COURIER

SECRET CIRCULAR AIRGRAM

For the Personal and Confidential Attention of the Ambassadors at Tegucigalpa, San Jose, Quito, Managua, Port-au-Prince, Caracas, San Salvador and Lima.

Refer our previous communications regarding War Refugee Board. Information has been received that there are in enemy-occupied Europe a number of persons holding passports issued in the names of various Latin American countries including the country to which you are accredited. Our information is that in a large number of cases such persons are interned under conditions which are immeasurably better than the treatment they would receive if they did not have such passports. It is reported that without such passports, such persons would be transported to Poland and death.

The plight of these refugees was the subject of a memorandum presented to the Department by the Polish Ambassador in Washington on December 24, 1943, in support of the request of his government that this Government intercede on humanitarian grounds to save the persons concerned from deportation to Poland by interceding to prevent the withdrawal of these passports in cases in which they may have been improperly issued.

The following are excerpts from a report of Dr. Kullmann, Vice Director of the Intergovernmental Committee, who has recently made an exhaustive investigation of the matter in Switzerland: QUOTE It is estimated that 4,000 (passports) have been issued from Switzerland and it is known that others have been issued from other neutral countries including Sweden. Some informants estimated the total number to be as high as nine to ten thousand but some thought that it did not exceed 5,000. In Switzerland it (the securing of the passports) was organized by private individuals and reached such proportions that the Swiss Federal Government had to intervene. Legal action was taken against several of the organizers and at the same time enquiry was made regarding the authority of some of the representatives of the South American states to carry on these transactions.

There seems little doubt that the German authorities are aware of what has been going on but for reasons of their own they have hitherto not adopted a general policy of withdrawing the

passports. While in many cases the possession of these documents has afforded the owners protection against persecution and even special treatment in some of the camps, in other cases they have afforded no protection at all and particularly so where the persons concerned were not interned. Originally the German authorities seem to have cherished the hope that the persons with these South American passports might constitute a basis for the exchange of German nationals in South American countries and it is not improbable that they still have vague hopes of this. Other reasons have been suggested for their lack of consistency. Recently however they have been making enquiries through some of the protecting powers of the South American Governments concerned regarding the genuineness of the documents and they have been submitting lists of persons concerned with a view to verification UNQUOTE.

Sir Herbert Emerson, Director of the Intergovernmental Committee, on the basis of the foregoing recommends that the Latin American Governments in whose names such passports have been issued, be approached on two points, QUOTE (first) that the Governments should refrain from withdrawing the passports which have been issued and (second) that if and when the protecting power on the request of the German authorities submits lists of persons with such passports they should instruct the protecting power that the passports have been confirmed UNQUOTE.

Although the Department does not condone the unauthorized issue of passports, it does not follow that the Department should withhold its intercession in a situation in which the lives of so many persons are at stake. The Department and the War Refugee Board agree with Emerson that where thousands of human lives lie in the balance because of war conditions and enemy persecutions, appropriate steps should be taken to avoid the nonrecognition by the Germans of such passports.

The Department understands that these passports, appearing on their face to have been issued by competent officials, are valid until they are cancelled. While Department agrees that the Government to which you are accredited is entirely within its rights in cancelling such passports, it urges that the right of cancellation be not exercised until the holders shall have reached a place of safety, so that the act of cancellation shall not be, in essence, condemnation of the holder to a terrible death. All that is here asked is that the Government to which you are accredited deal with the question at a time when it shall occasion the least possible measure of human suffering.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AMBASSADOR

You are instructed to memorize the contents of this airgram, burn the document and discuss the matter orally with the government to which you are accredited. Such report as you submit to the Department on this subject should be by secret courier.

HULL
(AAB)

DOCUMENT

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SEN1

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: April 7, 1944
NUMBER: 1181

CONFIDENTIAL

The Department has received from London Kullmann's report of his discussions with you, the Swiss authorities, the Polish Minister, the International Red Cross and representatives of voluntary agencies concerning the attitude of Switzerland towards those who assisted Poles, including Polish Jews, in France to obtain passports issued in the names of Latin-American countries, and the attitude of the German authorities with respect to the persons in enemy-controlled areas holding such passports. This Government is approaching the Latin-American Governments and is urging them on humanitarian grounds to take no action, at least until after the war, to revoke or cancel such passports or to indicate that they are or may be revoked or cancelled or may be considered ineffective or invalid. As you probably know, the Government of Paraguay has already advised this Government and the Intergovernmental Committee that it has not cancelled and is not considering cancelling such passports issued in its name.

There is some hope that Poles, including Polish Jews, holding such passports will continue to receive more favorable treatment than persons who do not. It is this Government's view that any action that might result in endangering their lives or subjecting them to transportation or worsening of their condition should be avoided. It is also of the view that all appropriate action calculated to protect the lives and welfare of these persons should be taken.

Accordingly, you are requested to approach appropriate officials of the Swiss Government and advise them of this Government's views. You should request appropriate officials of the Swiss Government to approach the Germans in an effort to induce them to continue to recognize the validity of Latin-American passports held by persons in Vittel and elsewhere unless the Government in whose name the passport has been issued takes affirmative action to cancel or revoke it or deny its validity. In this connection, Kullmann and others report that the Swiss Government has taken legal action against the persons in Switzerland who were instrumental in securing

these passports and that the Swiss Government has also undertaken an inquiry regarding the authority of some of the persons who have issued such passports. It is this Government's view, and appropriate Swiss authorities should be so advised, that the validity of the passports in question is not in issue and should not be put in issue by Swiss authorities in the absence of affirmative renunciation by the Latin-American Governments concerned. In any event, it would seem that such action and inquiry might, on humanitarian grounds, if no other, be postponed until after the war, and you should so inform the Swiss Government.

For your information, Kullmann has reported that the Swiss authorities are definite that any approach to the Germans would not only be ineffectual but would do more harm than good. This Government cannot agree with that view. The Department and the War Refugee Board have reasons to believe and are strongly of the view that it is of the utmost importance and can only help persons subject to enemy persecution that German authorities be kept continuously aware that the treatment of Jews and others in enemy-controlled areas is being followed with the closest attention.

Please keep the Department advised of any developments in regard to this situation.

(unsigned)

DOCUMENT

312

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 17, 1944
NUMBER: 3871

SECRET

Reference is made herewith to your cables of April 7, April 10, April 22, May 27, and June 5, 1944 numbers 1181, 1221, 1400, 1846, and 1921 and my telegram of April 13, 1944 No. 2297.

The following is the substance of material part of the June 13 memoire from the Foreign Office.

1. Passports of countries of Latin America (Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Venezuela) have circulated since the outbreak of the war among Jews living in German occupied territories, Poland especially. Consulates of various countries mentioned in Japan, Switzerland, Portugal, New York, Sweden and perhaps Poland issued these passports. Instructions were requested of interested Governments when such passports of countries whose interests Switzerland protects in Germany expired and when bearers asked the Swiss Legation in Berlin to renew them. The interested Governments in general refused to authorize the extension of those passports which were not recognized by them. This fact was not brought to the attention of German authorities but the Swiss Legation in Berlin was deprived henceforth of the possibility of giving these people protection.

2. Of these passports a rather large number are Paraguayan. Since Spain represents Paraguay in Germany, it seems that a list of a limited number of persons who alone should benefit from Spain's protection was given to the Spanish Embassy in Berlin by the government of Paraguay. It is not known by the Federal Political Department whether the Spanish Government received subsequently instructions correcting this situation in conformity with Paraguayan Government's statement mentioned in the second paragraph of the American Legation memorandum of April 10 (your 1181).

3. Admission to American civilian internment camps controlled by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Berlin, such camps being administered by analogy pursuant to POW Convention, was secured by a certain number of bearers of Latin American passports, generally Eastern European origin. Thus these persons virtually became candidates for an exchange of civilians between American countries and Germany. Those remaining in Poland, on the other hand, remained under regulations governing other eastern Jews. A census of inter-

nees at Compiegne and Vittel was taken recently and there was removed from these camps a group of Jews. In certain cases this seems to have involved bearers of Latin American passports whose validity was questioned.

4. Jews who had not been able to establish American nationality had already been removed from Compiegne and Vittel by the German police at the time the contents of the American Legation's notice of April 14 (your 1221) was delivered to the German Government. It appeared from verbal statements made to the Swiss Legation in Berlin by a German Foreign Office official that the latter welcomed an opportunity while there was still time to support recognition by the United States of any one claiming ties with a country of Latin America as exchangeable. In the future German Foreign Office would be ready to consider as eligible for exchange against Germans in the United States desiring to be repatriated all Jews interned in these camps who bear Latin American identity documents as well as those elsewhere known to the German Foreign Office.

5. Consequently it would seem logical to admit that the German Foreign Office, desiring to establish as large a basis as possible for foreseen exchanges, will do everything possible to exempt Jews bearing Latin American passports from deportation provided that an exchange agreement will effectively cover these Jews.

6. It is reported that there are still in Poland persons holding Latin American passports who until now have neither been interned nor considered for exchange, according to the Swiss Legation in Berlin. It appears that the best protection that could be given to them would be for the interested Governments to recognize officially all Latin American passports which Jews in Germany or other German occupied territories are holding and to make a formal declaration through protecting power to this effect. Of countries whose interests Switzerland protects in Germany only El Salvador and Venezuela have recently made such declarations through intermediary of Federal Political Department. As yet, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador and Costa Rica have not individually confirmed this attitude which should result from steps which the Department of State has taken with various countries of Latin America mentioned in paragraph two of the April 10 memorandum of the American Legation.

7. Although not implying any guarantee, the foregoing permits the hope that the German Foreign Office concurs with the State Department's views. The concrete proposal leading to the exchange of lists contained in a recent communication with the government of Germany and submitted to the Federal Political Department by the American Legation of May 31 (See Department's cable of May 27,

1944, No. 1846) should constitute a basis for a practical talk in this matter.

8. However, the following must be submitted to the Legation's attention by the Federal Political Department: the arrangements being considered will be effective only to the extent that the number of German citizens whose repatriation may be considered corresponds to the number of persons holding passports and other identity documents issued in the names of Latin American Republics. However, it has come to the Federal Political Department's attention that documents of this type are said to have been issued by the hundreds recently again.

9. Finally, any publicity whatsoever given to the action now being taken could compromise the essentially precarious status which one hopes to assure Jewish bearers of passports from Latin American countries.

We would appreciate information relative to success of steps referred to in paragraph two of above note which the American Embassy in Madrid undertook with the Spanish Government.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

313

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Legation, Bern
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 31, 1944
NUMBER: 1994

SECRET

With reference to the situation of the Jews who reportedly have been interned in Vittel, Isaac Sternbuch has approached the Legation. (Please refer also to my number 1958 dated March 30, 1944.) A total of two hundred and thirty eight persons comprised of children and adults most of whom have obtained documentation of ten Latin American Governments - Peru, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Honduras and others, are involved.

According to Sternbuch interested persons are attempting some kind of remedial action with Government whose officials abroad have issued the false documents which these persons possess. The statement has been made repeatedly that the State Department has interested itself and is urging the Governments concerned to find some means of alleviation either by complete recognition of nationality or by assuming responsibility in some other way for the victimized persons. Kindly inform me if this report is authentic. We have now clandestinely received information that largely because of some alleged action by the Spanish Embassy in Berlin as the protecting power of the Paraguayans, these persons are about to be or already have been removed elsewhere by the German authorities. The Swiss Foreign Interests Division has told me informally that the Government of Spain had been requested by the Germans to inquire into the bona fides not only of the Paraguayans but of all suspected claims and that other Governments denied responsibility and claims. However there is not available to me a complete picture of the affair.

The following four persons who claim U.S. nationality are contained in the list of internees concerned: Nettie and Lieba Wachtel, Malka Hagar and Hirsch. According to the records of the Legation, applications for documentation of Nettie and Lieba Wachtel and Hirsch as American citizens were submitted to the Department. In a list received from the Swiss authorities and transmitted to the Department as Legation's dispatch 6037 dated September 3, Malka Hager was reported as an American citizen. We have not yet received the Department's decisions concerning citizenship claims of these persons.

Interested Jewish circles in Switzerland and Sternbuch are fearful of the fate awaiting the above described group and believe that it may be possible to arrange with authorities of Germany an exchange of Germans who may at present be in North and South America for members of this group. Such arrangements it is realized would require time for negotiations and meantime pending submission of such proposal to German authorities it is Sternbuch's hope that the German authorities might be prevailed upon to postpone any summary action by which the group would be affected. The possibility that the Department might be willing to telegraph the American Embassy at Madrid asking it to communicate with the Spanish Foreign Office with a view to appropriately communicating with the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin in the premises, was therefore suggested to the Legation by Sternbuch. Sternbuch further suggested that in such an arrangement the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin might be asked to request the authorities of Germany to withhold any action until there could be an investigation of the possibility of arrangements for exchange against the Germans.

Accordingly Sternbuch's proposal is being submitted to the Department by me. Urgency is stressed by Sternbuch. That representations may also have been made in London to the International Committee and possibly in Washington too, I have reason to believe.

Until the status of the Hager and Wachtel cases is definitely determined I am requesting the authorities of Switzerland to ask the Germans to take no action.

My despatch number 6921 dated December 27, sent to the Department in microfilm number 33 reported the developments reported in the foregoing.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

314

BJR-254

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (RESTRICTED)

Bern
Dated July 3, 1944
Rec'd 7:23 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

4223, July 3, noon (SECTION ONE)

Notice number one: Swiss Legation Berlin has no knowledge of camps Bostortost Silesia and Bergau near Dresden but will nevertheless immediately undertake all necessary measures with a view to establishing both nature and object thereof. Reports concerning said camps will be transmitted earliest possible.

For some time in connection with foregoing there have been held internment camp of Bergen-Belsen near Celle, Hanover whose inclusion civilian exchanges is contemplated but not possessing American citizenship or citizenship other Swiss represented countries.

"Alien relatives" that is, those close relatives of American nationals not possessing American citizenship are not being admitted internment camps reserved for nationals of American nations. While awaiting exchange they are detained in above-mentioned temporary camp in which are held, for example, persons approved for Palestine Civilian Exchange but not possessing British nationality. (Note: Please see penultimate paragraph Department's 1846, May 27, indicating more lenient attitude in this regard).

It is appropriate to indicate with respect to remainder of Department's 1921 that to the knowledge of Swiss Legation no authentic national of American nations has been deported or otherwise deprived of rights resulting from his American nationality except for Venezuelan family Malkowsky and Chilean families Gorlin and Frumkin on whose behalf Swiss Legation made repeated representations as a result of their removal during April from Vittel.

German authorities continue to treat persons in question as nationals of American nations even in cases where respective governments on basis of information furnished by Swiss authorities have not definitely ruled regarding their status.

Polish and other Eastern European Jews, it is quite possible, thought it advisable to obtain a false Latin American passport. German authorities have subjected them to general treatment accorded to eastern Jews having established that these documents

not authentic. As persons concerned have not had possibility approach Swiss authorities cases this character not generally known to the Legation.

Formal assurances limited to persons who were on May 11 in civilian internment camps reserved for nationals of American continent were only given on that date by German Foreign Office to Swiss Legation.

No protection could be assured persons possessing more or less doubtful passports in eastern territories except by furnishing appropriate lists to German Government and communicating declarations similar to those which Honduras and Venezuela recently made in stating even more the declaration regarding all identity papers of Latin American countries of every kind found to be in possession of persons concerned.

/End of Section One/

HARRISON

GEM-330

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Governmental
agency. (RESTRICTED)

Bern
Dated July 3, 1944
Rec'd noon.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

4223, July 3, noon (SECTION TWO)

Notice two.

A. None of persons removed from Vittel had been able furnish proof Latin American nationality according statement made May 3 by chief competent section German Foreign Office to representative Swiss Legation Berlin in reply to latter's request. For most part these persons are Jews from east who previously claim to be Paraguayan nationals or nationals other American countries. They were assimilated on the basis of this declaration with nationals of countries at war with Germany and under protection Swiss Legation. They were consequently interned in camps reserved for nationals of Latin American Republics, United States and Great Britain.

These persons it developed in due course possessed no proof of nationality which they claimed. Consequently they were removed from camp where they had no right to be. It was further stated by competent German Foreign Office official that he could not accede to Legation's request for list of persons removed from Vittel because question merely involved internal German police measures and persons concerned had no right to Swiss protection. (Legation's telegram No. 3171, May 18 summarized this representation). Deportation measures taken at Vittel and Compiegne have affected no United States national according to the statements secret Counselor Sethe. The Swiss Foreign Office transmitted during April to Swiss Legation Berlin the list bearing 238 names deported from Vittel as result of measures taken by Germans which received from American Legation.

None of these persons appeared in Swiss Legation's register of United States nationals — it was established following examination. Swiss Consulate at Paris somewhat later forwarded list of 163 persons deported from internment camps to the Swiss Legation. The authorities of occupation furnished this list and none of these persons claimed American nationality.

United States false passports are practically nonexistent. German authorities have shown greatest reserve regarding deportation American nationals as this fact is shown to them. It is against persons claiming Latin American citizenship that "cleaning"

of internment camps is directed. It rests on fact that Jewish population in Poland and other Eastern European regions is in possession very large number false Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Haitian, Honduran, Ecuadorean, Paraguayan and Nicaraguan passports.

B. It was disclosed by an examination of two lists of persons removed from Compiegne and Vittel camps forwarded to Swiss Legation that large number internees concerned alleged to be Paraguayan citizens. Swiss Legation has not been able to determine whether persons concerned have claim to Paraguayan citizenship because Spanish Embassy Berlin represents Paraguayan interests in Germany and occupied countries.

/End of Section Two/

HARRISON

LFG-156

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (RESTRICTED)

Bern
Dated July 3, 1944
Rec'd 5:13 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

4223, July 3, noon (SECTION THREE)

Among persons appearing on lists in question only following bearing numbers corresponding to those of list from Swiss Consulate Paris (Note: Transmitted to Department with Legation's airmail 8466, June 12 pursuant Department's telegram No. 2001, June 10) were known to Swiss Legation:

143 Saul Malcowsky, Venezuelan; 144 Sara Malcowsky, Venezuelan; 145 Maurice Malcowsky, Venezuelan; 1 Eugenia Gorlin, Chilean; 2 Anna Frumkin, Chilean; 3 Hermine Frumkin, Chilean.

Chilean Legation Bern stated in note November 4, 1943 that as passports of Gorlin and Frumkin families were issued by Chilean Consulate Kobe, they were to be considered invalid as all documents issued by this Consular representation. It was declared by Chinese Legation in note of March 30, 1944 that deportation above named persons had come to its attention and Swiss Legation Berlin was requested by it to undertake on their behalf all necessary representations.

German Foreign Office in notes dated May 5 and June 20 considered cases of Gorlin and Frumkin families and strong representations for return to an internment camp of these Chileans were made. On behalf of Malcowsky family similar representations made.

C. Authorization of German authorities have been sought by Swiss Legation to have representative Swiss Consulate Paris visit Vittel Camp with a view to informing American internees of communications from their Government (Note: Please see penultimate paragraph Department's 1222, April 10 and its 1269, April 13). Camp will be visited near future as authorization given in principle.

D. Every opportunity taken by German authorities to reiterate that there has been deported no internee able furnish proof Latin American citizenship or American nationality. Relatively large number of persons, German authorities observed,

claimed citizenship of South America Republic supporting this with documents evidently false or being able furnish slightest proof. These persons never left Polish territory and Spanish is not spoken by them. Right is claimed by German Foreign Police to assimilate bearers of false documents with rest of population of Poland or other occupied countries and not to recognize subject false document.

/End of Section Three/

HARRISON

BAS-378

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (RESTRICTED)

Bern

Dated July 3, 1944
Rec'd 4:40 a.m., 4th.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

4223, July 3, noon (SECTION FOUR)

Swiss Legation Berlin following representation made by American Legation to chief of Federal Political Department requested and on May 11 obtained from German Foreign Office formal assurance that henceforth there would not be subjected to deportation action even bearers of doubtful Latin American identity papers on the condition that persons concerned already in internment camps for citizens American continent. On May 15 Swiss Minister at Berlin forwarded to chief of Federal Political Department a circumstantial report on subject. No new case of deportation bearers South American identity papers reported since this representation. It has not been possible to provide any assurance for bearers of doubtful South American identity papers who were not already on May 11 in internment camps.

E. With regard to request that Swiss authorities protest to German authorities against their action in passing on "merits of individual claims of persons holding United States or Latin American documentation" it must be pointed out in admitting that above quoted term envisages priority claims for civilian exchange that Swiss Legation has often indicated to German authorities that North and South American citizens included in civilian exchange groups were often persons other than those proposed and recommended by Swiss Legation and in whom greatest interest shown by American Government.

German Foreign Office replied to these strong oral representations that German Government also had to accept persons in whom it had only secondary interest and had no voice in composition German Civilian repatriation groups in America. German authorities unable in circumstances to admit that strong American representations were well founded.

According to view Swiss Legation owing to the fact that exchange groups constituted in Germany by domestic authorities particularly police no substantial consideration being given to Swiss Legation's suggestions satisfactory composition exchange groups can only be obtained through exchange by interested governments prior to departure of groups of formal lists. Except in cases of Malcowsky, Gorlin and Frumkin families no person able to show valid claim to citizenship of American country has been deprived of rights

pertaining thereto during 1944 to knowledge Swiss Legation. Additionally several hundred citizens of United States and Latin America protected by Swiss Legation whose papers forwarded through intermediary competent authorities ("pending case") not yet recognized countries concerned. Nevertheless these persons thus far permitted remain in internment camps foreseen for citizens of American Continent. German authorities in certain number cases this category already awaiting decision for one or two years formerly inquired recently whether one or another citizens of American countries is effectively recognized by his government as such and whether he is accepted for civilian exchange.

F. All Latin American countries represented in Germany by Swiss Legation Berlin except that Sweden represents Mexico, and Spain represents Bolivia and Paraguay. The matter in question (Note: Recognition of individual claims to nationality of Latin American countries pending review of case by government concerned) has been taken up with Swiss Legation by no Latin American country which Switzerland represents. Only Venezuela and Honduras during first half of June signified to German authorities that all bearers of identity papers issued by Venezuelan and Honduran Governments are to be treated in accordance with international regulations applicable civilian internees.

End notices.

/End of Message/

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

315

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: April 10, 1944
NUMBER: 1221

CONFIDENTIAL

FOLLOWING FOR MINISTER HARRISON, BERN

Following our 1181 of April 7 and referring to your 1958 of March 30 and your 1994 of March 31, although the motives of the Germans in according better treatment to Jews of Polish origin holding passports and other documents issued in the names of Latin American countries are not too clear, it would appear that they include (1) some hope that they might be considered exchange material against Germans in the Western Hemisphere and (2) some fear that their ill-treatment might afford the Latin American countries a pre-text for further limiting the freedom and economic activities of Germans resident in such countries.

The measure reported in your 1958 of March 30 may be an indication that Germany is beginning to doubt whether such Jews are considered exchange material and whether their treatment would affect the treatment of Germans in Latin America. This Government regards it as essential that these doubts be promptly and effectively dispelled.

Accordingly, please request the good offices of the Swiss Government in informing the Germans that this Government is undertaking discussions with Latin American countries for a further exchange of Germans in the Western Hemisphere for persons in German-controlled territory and that in this connection, the United States considers that all persons in Vittel and elsewhere holding passports and other documents issued in the names of Latin American countries will be eligible for such exchange.

Simultaneously, please request the appropriate Swiss authorities to advise the Germans that in the meantime this Government expects that these persons will be accorded the same rights, privileges and immunities that the German Government expects will be accorded to Germans in the Western Hemisphere. You may add that a considerable number of German civilians interned by various Latin American countries have

being placed by such countries in the custody of the United States and are presently in such custody within continental United States.

For your information, the substance of this message is being communicated to our Missions in the Latin American countries concerned. We are also making inquiry of such Latin American countries with respect to the authenticity of the information informally conveyed to you by the Swiss Foreign Interests Division which you referred to in your 1994 of March 31.

(Unsigned)

DOCUMENT

316

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Madrid
DATED: April 10, 1944
NUMBER: 992

CONFIDENTIAL

War Refugee Board sends the following for the Ambassador.

1. There are interned at Vittel, Belsen-Bergen, Leibnau, Tittmoning, Bergau and Compiegne and possibly at other places in enemy territory and areas controlled by the enemy a large number of persons, the majority of whom are Jews, holding consular documents, passports and other papers issued in the names of certain Latin American countries including Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Chile, and Haiti.

The Germans presumably know that the Polish Jews in question have obtained these passports and other documents in an extraordinary manner. In spite of this, they have received considerably better treatment than is generally received by Polish Jews. But for the fact that they were in possession of these papers, most if not all of these internees would already have been transported to Poland to their death.

Intercross has some measure of access to the camps in Vittel, Liebenau, Tittmoning, and Compiegne. In Belsen-Bergen and Bergau, where Intercross has no access, conditions are reported to be bad.

2. Late in 1943, the Department received reports that persons holding Paraguayan papers were threatened with the danger of deportation to Poland and death. Since these persons are generally of Polish origin, the Polish Ambassador at Washington earnestly sought our intervention in an attempt to save their lives. The Department assured the Polish Ambassador that the Department would take such steps as could be taken on behalf of these unfortunate people who are the victims of the Nazis.

During last December, the Paraguayan Government, following our demarche in Asuncion, assured the Intergovernmental Committee and this Government that the passports of these Polish Jews had not been canceled and that the Polish Government did not intend to cancel the passports issued in the name of the Paraguayan Government and held by internees. This was most important as most of these internees hold papers issued by the Government of Paraguay.

On February 29, 1944, Sir Herbert Emerson, the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee, informed us as follows:

There seems to be little doubt that the German authorities are aware of what has been going on but heretofore they have not adopted the general policy of withdrawing the passports for reasons of their own. In many cases those who possess these documents have been afforded protection against persecution and in some of the camps possession of these documents has even obtained special treatment for them. However, in other instances, especially where the persons concerned were not interned in camps, no protection at all has been afforded. It seems that originally the German authorities had the hope that these persons with such South American passports might constitute a basis for the exchange of German nationals in South American countries and it is not improbable that they still have vague hopes of this. Other reasons have been suggested to account for the inconsistency of the action taken by them. However, they have recently been making inquiries concerning the genuineness of the documents, through some of the protecting powers of the South American governments, and lists of persons concerned have been submitted with a view to verification.

Therefore, Sir Herbert recommended that an approach be made on two points to the governments in whose names the passports held by such internees were issued: First, instructions to the effect that the passports have been confirmed should be given to the protecting power if and when the protecting power, on the request of the German authorities, submits lists of persons with such passports; and two, the governments concerned should not withdraw the passports which have been issued.

4. The following is the substance of a report now made by Minister Harrison.

We have secretly received information that authorities of the German Government have either already moved these persons elsewhere or are about to remove them primarily because of some alleged action by the Spanish Embassy in Berlin as the Paraguayan protecting power. The Swiss Foreign Interests Division has informally told me that the Germans have requested the Spanish Government to investigate the bona fides not only of these holding Paraguayan passports but of all suspected claims and further that other governments have denied responsibility and claims.

Minister Harrison also reports as follows:

It is reported that four American citizens and 234 South American internees were evacuated on March 31 from the internment camp at Vittel to some prison, the location of which remains unknown. In this report, it is also stated that the Spanish Ambassador and the Swiss Minister in Berlin declined protective offices.

5. We have already requested the Governments of Latin America for humanitarian reasons to avoid questioning the validity of these passports and other documents until after the war and to inform the Germans through the protecting power that no question concerning these papers is to be raised. Also, our missions in the countries concerned have been requested by us to ascertain from the Spanish Government the substance of any communications it has had regarding this.

6. On the basis of the report Sir Herbert Emerson made, it is thought to be probable that it will not be possible to continue safe guarding the lives of these internees unless it is clearly understood that they are to be considered eligible for exchange against German civilians interned in countries of the Western Hemisphere.

The following is the substance of a cable which we have sent to our Legation in Bern.

We request you to seek the Swiss Government's good offices in informing the German Government that this Government is undertaking discussions with Latin American countries for a further exchange of persons in German-controlled areas for Germans in countries of the Western Hemisphere and that, in this connection, it is felt by the United States that all persons in Vittel and elsewhere who hold passports and other documents issued in the names of the Latin American countries concerned will be eligible for the above mentioned exchange.

At the same time, you should request the appropriate Swiss Government authorities to advise the Germans that in the meantime this Government expects that these people will be accorded the same privileges, immunities, and rights that the German Government expects will be extended to Germans in countries of the Western Hemisphere. It may be added that a large number of German civilians who were interned by various Latin American countries have been placed by such countries in the custody of the United States and they are in such custody within the continental United States at the present time.

Our Missions in Latin America have received cables of similar intent opening discussions on this subject.

7. In line with these steps which proceed from this Government's determination to make every attempt in this humanitarian task, you will urgently represent to the Government of Spain this Government's earnest preoccupation with this project, you will advise it of the discussions which are planned with the Latin American countries with reference to a further exchange of civilians with Germany, that we hold that all persons holding Latin American papers located in Vittel and elsewhere are eligible for exchange as outlined above, and that it is expected that during the time before such exchange the Germans will accord them the same treatment which the Germans expect their interned civilians to receive from Latin American countries.

At the same time, you should also make clear to the Spanish Government that this Government expects that Spain, for the good name of Spain and in the interest of humanity, will do everything possible to save these people who are threatened with death through no fault of theirs. We specifically request that you ask the Spanish Government to act accordingly in Madrid and Berlin and that instructions be given to the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin to afford these people all possible protection and that steps be taken at once by the Spanish Government to offset the impression that may have been created in Berlin with reference to the alleged absence of interest of the Western Hemisphere countries in the treatment of persons who hold papers issued in the names of countries of the Western Hemisphere.

In presenting the foregoing to the Spanish Government, it is requested that you explain that this proposal is on a level apart and entirely different from any discussions of a political or economic nature between our two governments. The issue involved concerns elementary humanitarian considerations only and is completely non-political. The United States Government is loath to believe that in an issue of this nature it would not count on Spain's wholehearted and immediate cooperation.

You should make every effort to secure the return to Vittel of the 238 who, according to the report made to Minister Harrison, have been evacuated from Vittel. Emphasis should immediately and specifically be placed on the problem of safeguarding these 238 persons, and it is requested that in reporting this specific subject you do not wait to make your general report.

DOCUMENT

317

AIRGRAM SENT

SECRET CIRCULAR AIRGRAM

Sent by Secret Courier
April 11, 1944
11 a.m.

For the personal and confidential attention of the Ambassadors at Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Peru, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

Refer our previous communications regarding War Refugee Board. Reference is made to Department's 1181 of April 7.

Minister Harrison at Bern has informed us that the Swiss Foreign Interests Division has advised him informally that the Spanish government had been requested by the Germans to inquire into the bona fides of certain Latin American passports, held by internees in enemy-controlled territory and that the Latin American governments have denied responsibility as well as any claims of the persons holding such passports. Please approach appropriate officials of the government to which you are accredited and inquire whether it has received any such inquiries through the government of Spain or otherwise from the Germans with respect to the validity of passports held by such internees and if such inquiry has been made, please ascertain the nature of the response, if any.

In view of the perilous situation in which these internees find themselves, the conclusion has been reached that perhaps the only way of safeguarding the lives of these unfortunate victims of Nazi persecution is forthwith to initiate through proper channels negotiations, for an exchange of nationals for which these people will be eligible. In contemplating such exchange negotiations, it is not expected that the government to which you are accredited will physically admit any such persons into its territory even on a temporary or tentative basis. This Government is prepared to take full responsibility for all arrangements necessary to route these persons to places elsewhere.

Proceeding on this basis, please approach the government to which you are accredited with the request that it give its approval to the Government of the United States approaching the German government through appropriate channels with a view to initiating such negotiations. Please also advise appropriate officials of the Paraguayan government that similar requests are being made of other Latin American countries, it being the hope of this Government that

it will be put in a position to initiate exchange discussions on a hemispheric basis. Please also advise such officials that in any exchange negotiations that may be entered into, it is of course understood that unquestioned citizens of the United States and of the Latin American countries will be considered by this Government as being in a category entitled to priority over others.

Please also request the government to which you are accredited, on humanitarian grounds, affirmatively to approach the German government through the protecting power with a demand that the lives of all persons holding passports issued in its name or claiming its citizenship on the basis of consular documents be safeguarded and that they be given all rights, privileges and immunities accorded to civilian internees of enemy nationality to whom the Geneva Convention regarding the treatment of prisoners of war is currently applied by analogy.

In view of the imminent danger in which the persons concerned find themselves, you are requested to act with the greatest possible dispatch.

Finally, we communicate to you, for communication to the government to which you are accredited, the substance of a cable which the Department has sent to our Minister at Bern as follows: QUOTE Although the motives of the Germans in according better treatment to Jews of Polish origin holding passports and other documents issued in the names of Latin American countries are not too clear, it would appear that they include (1) some hope that they might be considered exchange material against Germans in the Western Hemisphere and (2) some fear that their ill-treatment might afford the Latin American countries a pretext for further limiting the freedom and economic activities of Germans resident in such countries.

The measure reported in your 1958 of March 30 may be an indication that Germany is beginning to doubt whether such Jews are considered exchange material and whether their treatment would affect the treatment of Germans in Latin America. This Government regards it as essential that these doubts be promptly and effectively dissipated.

Accordingly, please request the good offices of the Swiss Government in informing the Germans that this Government is undertaking discussions with Latin American countries for a further exchange of Germans in the Western Hemisphere for persons in German-controlled territory and that in this connection,

the United States considers that all persons in Vittel and elsewhere holding passports and other documents issued in the names of Latin American countries will be eligible for such exchange.

Simultaneously, please request the appropriate Swiss authorities to advise the Germans that in the meantime this Government expects that these persons will be accorded the same rights, privileges and immunities that the German government expects will be accorded to Germans in the Western Hemisphere. You may add that a considerable number of German civilians interned by various Latin American countries have been placed by such countries in the custody of the United States and are presently in such custody within continental United States.

For your information, the substance of this message is being communicated to our Missions in the Latin American countries concerned. We are also making inquiry of such Latin American countries with respect to the authenticity of the information informally conveyed to you by the Swiss Foreign Interests Division which you referred to in your 1944 of March 31 UNQUOTE.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AMBASSADOR

You are instructed to memorize the contents of this airgram, burn the document and discuss the matter orally with the government to which you are accredited. Such report as you submit to the Department on this subject should be by secret courier.

HULL
(JDC)

DOCUMENT

SECRET BY COURIER

A-151

4:00 p.m.

Amembassy,
Managua (Nicaragua)

May 1, 1944

With reference to Department's A-118 of April 11 and A-129, April 22, 6:45 p.m., the Department has now been apprized that Papal Nuncio at Bern informed Minister Harrison that Vatican had attempted to work out relief measures for Jews holding Paraguayan documents and interned by Germany. Apparently, the question of eventual immigration as result of possible exchange was raised in addition to the question of recognition of documents. Paraguay is reported to have replied that the passports of Polish Jews at Vittel have been recognized by Paraguay.

It is further learned from Vatican sources that the trouble arose when the proposal was made to exchange these Jews for Germans located in South America. Jews who had Paraguayan passports were included in the list by Germany. A protest was made by Paraguay which stated that the passports had been illegally issued and Paraguay refused to recognize the passports. The Germans withdrew as a result of this and protection was suspended by Spain.

At the time this attitude is reported to have been taken by Paraguay, the assurance contained in our circular airgram of April 11 had evidently not (repeat not) yet reached Paraguayan Government.

Please verify information received from Bern and reiterate this Government's assurance that, in the event of exchange, Paraguay will not (repeat not) be expected to grant physical admission to any of the persons concerned even on a temporary or tentative basis.

In the light of these assurances, please impress upon the Paraguayan Government the extreme urgency with which this Government views the necessity of acting favorably without delay on proposals previously submitted and detailed in the airgrams under reference. You should impress upon Paraguayan officials that since failure to act would almost certainly spell death for persons involved, and that since no (repeat no) responsibilities or obligations would result for Paraguay from acquiescence in our

requests, we would be sorely disappointed if Paraguayan authorities should not (repeat not) whole-heartedly cooperate with our efforts to save these people.

HULL

DOCUMENT

319

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: Amlegation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: April 13, 1944
NUMBER: 2282

SECRET

Details of approaches which the Vatican made to various Governments of South America in an attempt to work out relief measures for Jews interned in Germany or German-occupied territory who hold documentation issued by those Governments were supplied to me on April 19 by the Papal Nuncio Bern. Apparently the question of eventual immigration to respective countries in course of possible exchange was raised in addition to the question of recognition of documentation. The following is the substance of the replies.

1. Because of laws forbidding admission, a negative reply was made by Panama with respect to Polish Jews.
2. Both Nicaragua and Costa Rica are disposed to recognize passports which their respective Consuls issued up to eight families which could remain in these Republics only during the war if the families are neither industrialists nor farmers.
3. They would be received in Bolivia.
4. A negative reply was made by Salvador and Guatemala.
5. Instructions to verify and recognize passports have been issued by Chile.
6. Each case would be considered individually by Uruguay.
7. No action could be taken by Haiti.
8. Passports could not be recognized by Peru.
9. Passports could be recognized by Cuba if no objection is made by Great Britain and the United States.
10. Passports of Polish Jews at Vittel have been recognized by Paraguay.

Bolivia and Paraguay are represented in Germany by Spain and the rest of the countries listed above are represented by Switzerland. We assume that they will inform their respective protective powers concerning any action which they take in the future following representations of the American Government.

It is stated by the Nuncio that in the present reportedly aggravated situation of certain victims the Holy See had requested its Madrid representative to ask the Government of Spain to inform the Spanish Ambassador at Berlin of the gravity of peril of Polish Jews who have Paraguayan documentation and to insist to him upon the urgency of effective protection for them.

Information had been received by the Nuncio that the cause of the trouble arose when the proposal was made to exchange these Jews for Germans located in South America. Jews who had Paraguayan passports were included in the list by Germany. A protest was made by Paraguay which stated that the passports had been illegally issued and Paraguay refused to recognize the passports. The Germans withdrew as a result of this and protection was suspended by Spain. I have been further informed by Nuncio that this has been confirmed by International Red Cross which has promised its intervention if an exchange is objective conditioned on Holy See's action. It is not known to me whether details of this proposal for exchange and its results are given in Kullmann's report quoted in your telegram of April 7, 1944, no. 1181. I discussed with Kullmann the idea of exchange and I urged him to foster it but I had not previously known that the idea had been taken up formally.

HARRISON

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- 998 -

DOCUMENT

320

APOSTOLIC DELAGATION

United States of America

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington 8, D. C.

No. 581/42.

This no. should be pre-
fixed to the answer

May 6, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

I beg to acknowledge your esteemed letters of April 28, 1944, and May 2, 1944, and assure you that the Holy See will continue to support the approaches of the United States to Latin American countries in view of securing recognition by these republics of consular documents of Jews in German-held territory.

In this connection I shall notify the Vatican of the assurance that the recognition of passports and other documents will not necessarily involve immigration and that, in the event of exchange, havens for the holders of such documents will be found elsewhere.

I trust that future efforts in this matter will meet with greater success.

With sentiments of esteem and every best wish, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
I. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

DOCUMENT

321

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMLEGATION, BERN
DATED: April 13, 1944
NUMBER: 1269

SECRET

FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD FOR THE MINISTER

The War Refugee Board is informed that there are small groups of refugees from Poland interned at Vittel, France and Bergen-Belsen, Germany, who claim American citizenship. The War Refugee Board is further advised that the Germans may make inquiry of the Swiss Government as to the validity of such claims. You are instructed to advise appropriate officials of the Swiss Government at the proper time that all such inquiries are to be answered in substance as follows:

Upon the receipt from the Swiss Government of all pertinent information available to the Germans relating to any claim to United States citizenship, asserted by any person within territory under enemy control, the Department will undertake fully to investigate the matter. While any particular claim to United States citizenship is under investigation by the Department and until the Swiss Government is specifically advised to the contrary by the Department, the claimant must be presumed to be a citizen of the United States and must be accorded all the rights, privileges and immunities to which such citizens are entitled with the exception that financial assistance may not (repeat not) be extended until the Department specifically authorizes such assistance.

The foregoing is in reference to the Department's 1151,
April 5, 1944.

(Unsigned)

DOCUMENT

322

SENT BY SECRET CIRCULAR AIRGRAM

SECRET BY COURIER

For the Personal and Confidential
Information of the Ambassadors at
Santiago, San Jose, Habana, Quito,
San Salvador, Guatemala, Port-au-Prince,
Tegucigalpa, Managua, Asuncion, Montevideo
and Caracas.

May 11, 1944
7:30 p.m.

With reference to previous communications from the Department and the War Refugee Board regarding protection of refugees with Latin American documents in German-held territory, you are informed that pursuant to our instructions the Legation at Bern has advised the Swiss Government with respect to claims to American citizenship by refugees in German-controlled areas as follows:

QUOTE The Department will undertake fully to investigate any claim to United States citizenship, asserted by any person within territory under enemy control, upon receipt from the Swiss Government of all pertinent information available to the Germans relative thereto. The claimant must be presumed to be a United States citizen and must be accorded all the rights, privileges and immunities to which such citizens are entitled while any particular claim to United States citizenship is under investigation by the Department and until the Swiss Government is specifically advised by the Department to the contrary, with the exception that until the Department so authorizes financial assistance may not (repeat not) be extended UNQUOTE.

You are authorized to advise the government to which you are accredited of the foregoing if you think it will help to obtain its effective cooperation in rescuing refugees with Latin American documents.

The Legation at Bern has also been instructed to request Swiss authorities to obtain from Germany immediate return to Vittel of previously deported refugees with Latin American documents. The Embassy at Madrid, pursuant to our instructions, has obtained assurance that Spain will endeavor to arrange for return of deported refugees to Vittel.

It is essential that demarche of Madrid Embassy be supported by similar urgent representations of other American republics in Madrid on various points covered in our circular airgram of April 11 and other relevant communications. Please act accordingly and advise us of results.

HULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

AIRGRAM

FROM: LaPaz, Bolivia
DATED: June 26, 1944
REC'D: July 7, 8 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-288, June 27, 1944, 5:00 p.m.

Reference Department's secret airgram A-221 of June 2,
4:35 p.m.

In response to requests made in compliance with the Department's directives, the Bolivian Minister of Foreign Affairs informed me orally on June 24 that he would be very glad to cooperate by complying with the requests at the top of page 4 of the airgram under reference; that he gives the approval of the Bolivian Government as requested in the last new paragraph of page 6 of the Department's airgram under reference; and that he would immediately communicate with the local representative of the protecting power along the lines of the first new paragraph on page 7 of the airgram under reference.

WOODWARD

DOCUMENT

32

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Santiago
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 30, 1944
NUMBER: 932

SECRET

Reference is made herewith to your circular airgram of May 11.

I am informed formally by letter from Fernandez that in the case of Bern and Madrid he has taken action desired by you in airgram under reference.

BOWERS

DOCUMENT

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1400

San Jose, Costa Rica,
May 16, 1944.

Subject: Costa Rica consents to uphold validity of all
Costa Rican passports held by persons whose lives
might otherwise be in danger.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

With reference to my telegram No. 304 of May 16, 4 p.m.,
concerning the precarious situation of a number of persons
holding passports issued in the name of the Costa Rican
Government and the Costa Rican Government's agreement to uphold
the validity of such passports, I have the honor to enclose the
original note, No. 943-B of May 15, 1944, from the Foreign Office,
1/ together with the translation of that note, confirming the verbal
2/ assurance which had previously been given to me by then Foreign
Minister Echandi.

While the matter was taken up orally with the Foreign
Minister, he requested that a written note presenting the views
of the United States Government be sent him for the archives.
The enclosed note is his reply.

The attached note does not state specifically that the
persons holding these Costa Rican passports may be considered
eligible as Costa Rican citizens for inclusion in the exchange
of German and Costa Rican nationals, but I have received verbal
assurances from the Foreign Office that the language of the note
implies such an inclusion since the Costa Rican Government
cannot deny citizenship to the holders of such passports at the
same time they uphold the validity of the passports. However,
while the note in question also omits specific mention of the
fact that the Costa Rican Government would not welcome the holders
of such passports to Costa Rican territory, this connotation is
likewise brought out in the second sentence of the first paragraph
of the Foreign Minister's note where he refers to the fact that the
United States Government will assume the responsibility for all
the arrangements necessary for the transportation of such persons
to non-Costa Rican territories.

The Foreign Minister appears to be of the opinion that his note No. 948-B gives the Costa Rican Government's consent to all the recommendations set forth in the Department's secret airgrams of March 31, April 11 and May 1 and 10, and unless the Department thinks it advisable or necessary I shall not approach him again to formulate a demand addressed to the German Government, through the protecting power, that the lives of all persons holding Costa Rican passports be safeguarded and that they be given all rights, privileges and immunities accorded to civilian internees of enemy nationality to which the Geneva Conferences regarding the treatment of prisoners of war is applied by analogy, since the United States Government is the channel of communication for the Costa Rican Government to the Swiss Government which is protecting Costa Rican interests.

Respectfully yours,

Fay Allen Des Portes

Enclosures:

- (1) Original note dated May 15, 1944
from Costa Rican Minister for
Foreign Affairs; Committed - Ed. 7
- (2) Translation of note

Enclosure No. 2 to dispatch No. 1400 of May 16, 1944 from
the Embassy at San Jose, C.R.

Republic of Costa Rica
Ministry of Foreign Relations

948-B

San Jose, May 15, 1944.

Mr. Ambassador:

I have the honor to inform Your Excellency of the receipt of your very courteous, strictly confidential note No. 251 of the 15th instant, by which you request the opinion of the Government of Costa Rica with respect to the possibility of preserving the legal value of various passports possessed by Europeans, usually Poles and Jews, in connection with which there might be some doubt with respect to the legality of their expedition, in order to protect their holders against acts of cruelty of the German authorities. Your Excellency adds that your Government will assume the responsibility for all the arrangements necessary for the transportation to non-Costa Rican territories of the holders of such passports by virtue of analogous rights granted to them by the Geneva Convention with regard to Prisoners of War.

I am pleased to communicate to Your Excellency the agreement of my Government with the procedure indicated in your above cited note, since, and until there has been effective proof of the reasons for the invalidity of the passports under reference, they are to be held valid by reason of their having been issued by Costa Rican consular officials, particularly if a humane duty is thereby fulfilled.

I take this opportunity to reiterate to Your Excellency the sentiments of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

Julio Acosta

His Excellency
Fay A. Des Portes
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the United States.

Translated by: mc
Checked by: srt

DOCUMENT

326

AIRGRAM

FROM: Habana
DATED: June 16, 1944
REC'D: June 20, 8 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-1294, June 16 9:35 a.m.

Reference is made to Department's airgrams A-398 of May 31, 7 p.m. and A-968 of June 10, 4:50 p.m.

Representations referred to in Embassy's airgram A-1071, May 19, 3 p.m. made by the Cuban Embassy in Madrid were primarily concerned with the return of deportees to Vittel. However, after further consultation today with the Minister of State on the entire matter raised in the Department's airgram A-738 of May 3 and circular airgram of May 11, he has informed me orally that instructions, similar to the communication given by the Cuban Government to the Netherlands Embassy in Washington (see Embassy's airgram A-1127, May 26, 9:20 a.m.) will be given to the Cuban Embassy in Madrid--namely to request the protecting power to inform the German Government that the Cuban Government would not permit the validity of any of its passports to be questioned by the Germans. The Minister assured me that, as in the case of the above-mentioned communication to the Netherlands Embassy, no mention would be made by the Cuban Embassy in Madrid of the Minister's previously made oral reservation to me, namely that, if conclusive proof were presented regarding the falsification of a Cuban passport, he could not insist upon its recognition since to do so might endanger the holders of legitimate passports. The Minister added that no reference would be made to the possibility that some of the passports in question might be falsified.

The Minister also said that he would instruct the Cuban Embassy in Madrid to have the protecting power request the German Government to accord holders of documents issued in Cuba's name the same treatment that the Germans hope will be received by her nationals in the Western Hemisphere.

The Minister also indicated that the Cuban Government is agreeable to all holders of documents issued in Cuba's name being considered exchange material for German nationals held in this hemisphere provided such holders of Cuban passports as the Cuban Government desires be sent to havens elsewhere than Cuba.

The foregoing represents the positive action taken on the matter by the Minister of State who I feel has been as cooperative as could be expected, particularly since the Cubans are, of course, primarily interested in repatriating their own bona fide nationals.

BRADEN

DOCUMENT

327

C
O
P
Y

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(By Courier)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

No. 1388

Quito, April 18, 1944

Subject: Unauthorized Passports Issued to Persons Persecuted
by Enemy Authorities.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

With reference to the Department's secret circular airgram of March 31, 1:05 p.m., regarding passports issued in the names of various Latin American countries to persons in enemy-occupied Europe, I have the honor to report that the substance of the Department's airgram was conveyed orally to the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday. The Minister then read to me a copy of a note sent to the British Minister here on March 30 which was to reply to a note from the British Minister concerning the unauthorized issuance of Ecuadorian passports in Stockholm and which he said explained the attitude of the Ecuadoran Government in the matter. I enclose a copy of this note, which was later furnished me by the British Minister, as well as a translation of the communication.

It will be noted that the Foreign Office communication indicates that while the Ecuadoran Government is not disposed to confirm the validity of unauthorized passports in the possession of individuals persecuted by the enemy, it will, nevertheless, not cancel the passports prior to such time as the holders reach a place of safety, and that both the Inter-Governmental Committee in London and Ecuadoran consular officers abroad have been informed in this sense.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)

JAMES W. GANTEBEIN

James W. Gantebein

American Charge d'Affaires, a.i.

Enclosure:

1. Copy of note Amended - Ed. 7
2. Translation of note

Original to the Department of State
Copy to the Consulate General, Guayaquil

AIR MAIL

Enclosure No. 2 to despatch No. 1388 of April 18, 1944, from the American Embassy, Quito, Ecuador.

(Translation)

C O P Y

Republic of Ecuador
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DIPLOMATIC DEPARTMENT

No. 28-DC-13
Quito, March 30, 1944

Mr. Minister:

In reply to Your Excellency's communication No. 17 dated the 22d current, in which you are good enough to inform me of the desire of the Government of His Britannic Majesty to know whether Ecuador will permit the retention of passports which have been granted by the ex-Consul of my country in Stockholm to Israelites who are living in states occupied by the German forces, I have the honor to state to Your Excellency that my Government, notwithstanding the fact that it denies all validity with respect to the aforementioned passports, considering the grave penalties and difficulties to which those individuals would be subjected in case they were deprived of those documents, has decided not to insist on their cancellation while the existing circumstances prevail.

This decision of the Ecuadoran Government was transmitted to the Inter-Governmental Committee of Political Refugees, and Ecuadoran consular agents (officers) have been instructed in the same sense.

I must make clear that the aforementioned decision of my Government does not confer any right on those persons who possess passports with respect to entry into Ecuador without the fulfillment of the formalities established by the Alien Law (now) in force and does not constitute precedents for claiming a presumed acquisition of nationality.

Ecuador will deny all validity concerning those documents as soon as their bearers have left areas controlled by the Nazi armies.

I avail myself of the opportunity to renew to
Your Excellency the assurances of my highest and most
distinguished consideration.

(Signed)
FRANCISCO GUARDERAS

To His Excellency
Mr. LWSLIF CHARLES HUGHES-HALLET,
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
of Great Britain,
CITY.

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DOCUMENT

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SECRET

AIRGRAM

VIA COURIER

From American Embassy
San Salvador, El Salvador
Dated May 3, 1944
Rec'd May 10, 11 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-186, May 3.

The Salvadoran Minister for Foreign Affairs advised me this morning with respect to your secret airgram of April 22, 7:30 p.m. (received May 2) that immediately following our interview on April 15 (airgram No. A-164, April 18), he had addressed a note to the Spanish Minister in this city along the lines of my suggestions based on the Department's secret airgram of a few days before. He assured me that the Spanish Minister had acknowledged the receipt of this note and it is to be presumed that he duly informed Madrid.

THURSTON

DOCUMENT

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AIRGRAM

SECRET

FROM: American Embassy
San Salvador, El Salvador
DATED: July 7, 1944
REC'D: July 14, 2 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

A-288, July 7

Department's secret airgram No. A-204, June 29, 3:00 p.m.

The following is for the information of the War Refugee Board:

The note of April 17, 1944, from Dr. Arturo Ramon Avila, at that time Foreign Minister, to the Spanish Minister (in charge of German interests) reads in translation as follows:

"The Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador begs His Excellency the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Spain and Representative of the Interests of Germany in this Republic, if he perceives no objections, that he interest himself, with a view to safeguarding the lives of all those persons who bear Salvadoran passports of who claim (pretendan) to hold Salvadoran citizenship, in order that the German Government, for humanitarian reasons, extend to the said persons all the privileges, rights and immunities granted to interned civilians in conformity with the Convention of Geneva on Prisoners of War. Arturo Ramon Avila thanks in advance His Excellency the Duke of Bailen for his courtesy in taking this action, which, if it appears opportune to him, he would appreciate done by cable, and renews to him the assurances of his distinguished consideration. San Salvador, April 17, 1944."

The note of May 20, 1944, from Dr. Julio Enrique Avila, the present Foreign Minister, to the Spanish Minister, reads in translation as follows:

"The Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador begs His Excellency the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Spain and Representative of the Interests of Germany in this Republic, to

consider as modified the request referred to in the note verbale addressed to him by (the Foreign Minister's) predecessor, Dr. Arturo Ramon Avila, that he interest himself, if there are no objections, with a view to safeguarding the lives of all those persons who bear Salvadoran passports or who prove (justifiquen) that they possess Salvadoran citizenship, in order that the German Government, for humanitarian reasons, extend to the said persons all the privileges, rights and immunities granted to interned civilians in conformity with the Convention of Geneva on Prisoners of War. Julio Enrique Avila thanks in advance His Excellency the Duke of Bailen for his courtesy in taking this action, which, if it appears opportune to him, he would appreciate done by cable, and renews to him the assurances of his distinguished consideration. San Salvador, May 20, 1944."

The modification consists in the change of the words "persons who bear Salvadoran passports or who claim (pretendan) to hold Salvadoran citizenship" to "persons who bear Salvadoran passports or who prove (justifiquen) that they possess Salvadoran citizenship."

The Embassy unsuccessfully tried to have the present Foreign Minister send a note verbale identical with that of his predecessor, but Dr. Avila insisted on making the modification. He informs me that he is contemplating no new steps.

The Spanish Minister confidentially informed me that he had not bothered to transmit the second request as he considered it so similar to the first. The Swiss Government is therefore undoubtedly still working under the more liberal terms of the first request. It is consequently strongly suggested that no further action be taken unless the situation changes.

GADE

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DOCUMENT
AIRGRAM

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FROM: Guatemala
DATE: May 9, 1944
RECD: 3 p.m. 13th.

TO: SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASH. D. C.

4-22, May 9, 5 p.m.

Reference Department's secret airgram 4-22, May 1, 12:45
and similar airgram May 1, 7:35 a.m. regarding relief
measures for certain persons holding Guatemalan documents now
interned by Germans.

This matter was taken up in strict confidence yesterday with
the Minister for Foreign Affairs who, after consultation with
President Ubico, has furnished the Embassy with a confidential
memorandum reading in translation as follows:

"The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala in entire
agreement with the conversation held today with His Excellency,
the Ambassador of the United States, takes pleasure in indicating
that the points discussed are accepted in the following terms:

The Government of Guatemala authorizes the Government of the
United States to undertake negotiations for the exchange of persons
possessing Guatemalan passports, against German nationals in this
hemisphere.

It is understood that the bearers of such passports who are
not desirable as immigrants to Guatemala will not be admitted
into the country.

The Government of Switzerland, as the protecting power of
Guatemalan citizens, will be requested to assert the rights
granted to interned civilians in conformity with the Geneva
Convention.

If it should be suspected that any of the passports were
incorrect, the Government of Guatemala will maintain its right to
cancel or invalidate them; but it will do that when the bearers
have been placed in safety.

It is understood that Guatemala will not assume any
additional obligation as a result of its acquiescence in the
present petition of the Government of the United States to
which it accedes, inspired by humanitarian sentiments and as

a courtesy to the Government of the United States."

The Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me in the course of our conversation that he had not been approached by the Spanish Minister in the matter. The Papal Nuncio had taken up with him the admission of Jewish refugees to Guatemala, to which he had replied that the Guatemalan Government felt that it had already admitted as many such persons as the country could readily absorb at the present time.

It is anticipated that the communication of the Guatemalan Government to the Government of Switzerland will be made through this Embassy. If no such communication is forthcoming in the course of the next few days, I shall remind the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the urgency thereof.

LONG

DOCUMENT

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SECRET

AIRGRAM

FROM:
Port-au-Prince, Haiti,
May 24, 1944
Rec'd: May 27, 1944, 8 a.m.

The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

A-286, May 24, 11:00 a.m., 1944.

Department's secret circular airgram of May 11, 7:30 p.m., 1944, and previous concerning refugees:

The Haitian Minister for Foreign Affairs is disposed to ask the American Government, being charged with the representation of Haitian interests in Spain, to present to the Spanish Government a request that the good offices of that Government be utilized to invite the German Government to accord to all persons holding Haitian passports the status of Haitian nationals until the receipt from the Haitian Government of a report on the validity of the passports in question.

In making this request, the Minister again expressed concern lest any action taken be prejudicial to the interests of any authentic Haitians, and the desirability or usefulness of making such a request of the Spanish Government when the Swiss Government represents Haitian interests in territory occupied by the enemy.

The Foreign Minister therefore requested that, before delivering any official note in the sense requested, an informal approach to the Spanish Foreign Office be made for assurance that it will carry out the request made. The Minister further observes that he has confidence that the United States Government will so conduct the negotiations as to safeguard the status of Haitian nationals which are under the control of the Germans.

CHAPIN

DOCUMENT

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SECRET BY COURIER

A-216
2:00 PM
SENT BY SECRET AIRMAIL

July 5, 1944

AMEMBASSY
PORT-AU-PRINCE (HAITI)

CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE

Following the promulgation by Haiti of the decree-law of May 29, 1939, a number of persons in Europe were naturalized as citizens of Haiti pursuant to its provisions. Thereafter Haiti promulgated the decree-law of February 4, 1942, which provided that persons so naturalized would lose their Haitian citizenship unless they actually came to Haiti on or before August 5, 1942. By February 4, 1942, however, the major portion of the world was at war and passenger transportation facilities between European ports and Haiti were, for all practical purposes, non-existent. Furthermore, transit had become virtually impossible between German-occupied areas and the neutral ports from which passenger vessels were still plying the Atlantic. Moreover, Haiti herself had declared war on Germany and Italy on December 12, 1941, and consequently on February 4, 1942, Haitian citizens, including those naturalized pursuant to the decree-law of May 29, 1939, located in territory under the control of Germany or Italy were deemed by such countries to be enemy nationals subject to the travel and other restrictions incident to such status. Indeed, a number of Haitian citizens, including persons naturalized as such under the decree-law of May 29, 1939, were interned by the German authorities as enemy aliens. As a consequence of the abnormal travel conditions brought about by the war, and particularly by their status vis-a-vis Germany as enemy nationals Haitian citizens located in German-controlled areas including those naturalized under the decree-law of May 29, 1939, found it impossible to make arrangements to arrive in Haiti prior to August 5, 1942. It will be perceived, therefore, that the failure of Haitian citizens located in German-controlled areas who were naturalized under the decree-law of May 29, 1939, to comply with the condition to their citizenship subsequently imposed by the decree-law of February 4, 1942, was due to no fault of their own but solely to force majeure and the intervening acts of foreign princes and other sovereignties. Indeed, a number of such persons were disabled from utilizing means of escape from German-controlled areas heretofore available to persons of their original nationality because as Haitian citizens deemed to be enemy nationals by the Germans, they were interned as such by the German authorities, or if not interned, subjected to such supervision as to make escape, which in times past was possible for others, impossible.

Cancelling of the Haitian citizenship of many of these people for conduct beyond their control is thus not only an additional misfortune to be suffered among many others brought on by the war, but in the case of persons of Jewish ancestry, constitutes a sentence of death. This is so because the Germans have undertaken to exterminate all Jewish citizens of the territories under their control. To this end, their properties and businesses have been confiscated and they have been herded in unsanitary camps where they receive little food and less care, and whence the survivors are transported, normally in cattle cars, to Poland to be shot, asphyxiated, or put at arduous labor without food until they die. Those Jews among the persons in Europe who were naturalized as Haitian citizens under the decree-law of May 29, 1939 were spared this fate as the German decrees did not apply to citizens of neutral countries or of countries not on the continent of Europe. Like other Haitian citizens, however, they found it impossible to comply with the condition imposed on their citizenship by the decree-law of February 4, 1942. As a consequence many of them have been removed from the internment camps or restricted liberties in which they were held as enemy nationals by the Germans and sent to concentration camps and otherwise dealt with as continental non-neutral Jews as above described. A few, however, have as yet escaped this fate, but information has been received that the Germans are now inquiring about their status as Haitian citizens. An example is Mrs. Zelman Solowiejczyk, 42 years old, and her daughter Sephora, 7 years old, of Antwerp, Belgium, whose naturalization was recorded in "Moniteur" of Port-au-Prince of December 23, 1939. According to last reports, they are still held in Antwerp pending receipt of word from Haitian authorities. There are undoubtedly many others in the same predicament.

In view of Haiti's humanitarian stand as shown by your A-286 of May 24 and otherwise, and since the persons concerned failed to comply with the condition to their Haitian citizenship subsequently imposed through no fault of their own, it is hoped that the Haitian government will take such action as may be necessary to preserve and confirm the Haitian citizenship of persons in enemy controlled areas at least until the war is over and the danger past. To this end, please address yourself to appropriate authorities of the Haitian government, suggesting the urgency of the matter and that a prompt declaration to Germany through the protecting power that the decree-law of February 4, 1942, does not apply to persons who continuously since prior to that date have been within territory under the control of Germany or Italy, and who consequently have been unable to comply therewith, will save a number of innocent lives.

DOCUMENT

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SECRET

AIRGRAM

FROM: Port-au-Prince, Haiti,
DATE: July 12, 1944.
REC'D: July 17, 8 a.m.

URGENT

The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

A-369, July 12, 11:00 a.m., 1944.

I brought to the attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs today the information transmitted in Department's airgrams Nos. A-214 of July 5, 12:30 p.m. and A-216 of July 5, 2:00 p.m., 1944, and enquired whether the Haitian Government had reached any decision after making the study referred to in my airgram No. 321 of July 15, 11:00 a.m., 1944.

The Minister replied that the Haitian Government will issue instructions to the legation at Bern to inform the German Government through the Swiss authorities that Haiti considers all of its passports held by persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory valid until an examination of each case shall have been made. This applies to those persons who were unable to comply with the Decree-Law of February 4, 1942, as well as to those persons holding documents whose validity is open to doubt.

The Minister stated that this decision, which he will confirm to me in writing, will require the approval of the Council of Ministers, a meeting of which will be held soon, but that he does not anticipate any objections from that body.

He added that it is purely a humanitarian measure and that the Haitian Government considers that many of the persons who will benefit by it are undesirable. I gathered that, after the conclusion of hostilities, unfavorable decisions will be reached in many cases.

WILSON

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Tegucigalpa
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: April 26, 1944
NUMBER: 127

SECRET

This morning the matters contained in the Department's A-77 of April 20, received last evening, were discussed by me with the [Honduran] Minister for Foreign Affairs. Complete success on all points. I was given by the Minister two signed notes relating respectively to exchange negotiations and to the material at top of page three of the airgram which is under reference. Later today we will cable translations.

Inquiries from the Spanish Minister concerning validity of the passports have not been received by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and such inquiries as may be received later will be ignored by him.

FAUST

DOCUMENT

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SECRET

AIRGRAM

FROM

Managua

Dated: April 24, 1944

Rec'd April 28 4 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-177, April 25, 10:30 a.m.

Embassy's despatch no. 2137, dated April 17 regarding
Nicaraguan passports held by Europeans in Occupied Europe.

The Nicaraguan Foreign Office informs the Embassy of its
dispatch of the following telegram to the Swiss Foreign Office
on April 22, 1944 (translation):

"I request Your Excellency to address himself
to the German Government asking that international
conventions covering prisoners of war be applied
to all internees in concentration camps who are the
bearers of Nicaraguan passports. Accept, etc."

(Signed)
FINLEY

DOCUMENT

SECRET

AIRGRAM

FROM
Managua
Dated May 5, 1944.
Rec'd May 13 4 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington

A-200, May 9, 10:30 a.m.

Department's airgram no. 161 of May 1, 4 p.m.

In a note dated May 2, the Nicaraguan Foreign Office stated that it would be glad to see the selection of its nationals for exchange made in the following order:

Felipe Ibarra Mayerga
Ernesto Fortocarrero
Jose de la Luz Guerrero; his wife, Susana; and
their children, Jeanine, Jesette, Jean Claudie,
and Jose
Aquiles Solorzano
Ida Roskies and her daughters, Raquella and Sonia

The last named three persons are Poles who have obtained Nicaraguan passports and whose exchange is desired on humanitarian grounds.

As for the other persons in occupied Europe who are bearers under one circumstance or another of Nicaraguan passports, the note states that the Nicaraguan Government consents to their exchange but presumably on the basis of the assurances given by the Embassy upon authorization from the Department that these persons will not reach Nicaragua.

The above is separate from and in addition to the authorization given by the Nicaraguan Government to the Nicaraguan Consul at Bern, Switzerland, to grant 100 children Nicaraguan visas and to keep their visas valid until transport becomes available (see the Embassy's telegram no. 271 dated May 5, 4 p.m.).

STEWART

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SECRET

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 2163

Asuncion, Paraguay
June 3, 1944

Subject: Holders of Paraguayan Passports in German
Concentration Camps

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable
The Secretary of State
Washington

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's secret airgram A-158, May 22, 6:15 p.m., my reply A-236, June 3, 11:15 a.m., and my telegram No. 315 of June 3, 9:00 a.m., 1944, regarding the action which the Paraguayan Government proposes to take concerning the holders of Paraguayan passports who are interned in German concentration camps, particularly in France.

As the previous statements of the Paraguayan attitude had been made orally, I considered it advisable to obtain a more formal communication, and, therefore, after discussion with the Under Secretary of Foreign Relations, and at his suggestion, I addressed a Note Verbale to the Ministry asking for information on the two points mentioned in the Department's A-158, May 22. A Note Verbale in reply has now been received from the Ministry of Foreign Relations, No. 483, June 6, 1944. Copies and translations of both communications are transmitted herewith.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
Leslie E. Reed
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosures:

Copy and translation of
Note Verbale No. 282
Copy and translation of
Note Verbale No. 483

Enclosure to Despatch No. 2163 from Asuncion, Paraguay, June 8, 1944.

C O P Y

No. 282

NOTE VERBALE

The Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the United States of America presents his compliments to His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Relations and Worship of Paraguay and with reference to negotiations carried on with the Honorable Wesley Frost, former American Ambassador to Paraguay, concerning certain persons now interned in German concentration camps who claim Paraguayan nationality and are the holders of Paraguayan passports, has the honor to request information as to the steps which may have been taken by the Paraguayan Government to obtain from the German Government due respect for the Paraguayan documents of identity in question.

Information is also requested as to whether the Paraguayan Government authorizes the United States Government to negotiate for an exchange of the persons now detained in German concentration camps holding Paraguayan passports.

Asuncion, June 5, 1944.

Enclosure to Despatch No. 2163 from Asuncion, Paraguay
June 8, 1944

TRANSLATION

No. 483

NOTE VERBALE

The Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship respectfully salutes the Embassy of the United States of America and, acknowledging receipt of Note 282 of the 5th instant, has pleasure in stating as follows:

1. The Paraguayan Government recognizes the validity of the passports granted by Paraguayan consular representatives in favor of Polish and Hebrew citizens and those of other nationalities now in German concentration camps, extending its protection in this manner to the persons holding them.

2. The Paraguayan Government has taken up through the Spanish Government the manner of obtaining the departure of such persons from European territory occupied by Germany.

3. The Paraguayan Government authorizes the United States Government to negotiate an exchange of the persons now detained in German concentration camps who hold Paraguayan passports; such persons, however, may not enter Paraguayan territory but should proceed to the places indicated by the American authorities.

4. In the request for exchange, Paraguay asks that preference may be given to Paraguayan citizens who happen to be in European territory occupied by Germany, who should be repatriated in order to return to their native soil.

The Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship takes this opportunity to reiterate to the American Embassy the assurances of its most distinguished consideration.

Asuncion, June 6, 1944.

DOCUMENT

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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECRET

No. 790

Lima, July 7, 1944.

Subject: The Exchange of Persons Between The American
Republics and Germany.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

With reference to the Department's secret instruction No. 3358 of June 24, 1944, I have the honor to submit the following reply to the questions raised regarding the possible exchange of German nationals in Peru for Peruvian nationals in German territory.

1/ 1. There is enclosed a list of Peruvians who wish to be repatriated from Europe, this list having been furnished by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

2. The Spanish Embassy attempted to prepare a list of Germans who wished to leave Peru for Germany but was forced to abandon the effort because (a) the persons involved changed their minds after each allied bomber raid on Germany, (b) some wanted to go to Spain, Portugal or Switzerland but not to Germany, (c) some were deported and are now in Detention Camps in the United States. There is, at the moment, record of only two single women about 30 years of age, who seek repatriation to Germany on an exchange basis. Perhaps others would show a desire to return, if publicity could be given through the Spanish Embassy to the fact that an exchange might be possible.

3. The small number which probably would be involved in an exchange between Peru and Europe, doubtless could be transported to and from a Caribbean or Atlantic port by regular commercial means.

2/ 4. The Peruvian Government's attitude toward the problem of caring for European refugees is explained in an enclosed memorandum prepared by the Counsellor of this Embassy following several conversations with officials of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

3/ 5. There is enclosed a memorandum of references to previous despatches from this Mission covering the subjects of deportation of Germans from Peru, possible exchange of nationals, and possible

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refuge for the oppressed of Europe.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador

(Signed)

GEORGE H. BUTLER
George H. Butler
First Secretary of Embassy.

Enclosures:

1. List
2. Memorandum
3. Memorandum

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 790, July 7, 1944, from the Embassy, Lima.

LIST OF PERUVIANS WHO WISH TO BE REPATRIATED
FROM EUROPE

Lucila Talleri de Castro

Mariana Castro Talleri

Lucila Castro Talleri

Isabel Castro Talleri

Victor Castro Talleri and wife

Raul Castro Talleri

One Peruvian servant -- all residing in Paris.

Berengere Serelle de Mujica

Francisco Mujica Serelle (under four years) -- formerly of France;
now residing in Barcelona.

Elisabeth de Luna and son (under four years) -- residing in Vienna.

Juanita Anderson -- residing in Paris.

Olga Cardenas Castro and family -- residing in Paris.

Senora Rosa Castro Iglesias de Menchaca -- residing in Paris.

Sr. and Sra. Italo Matellini -- residing in Germany.

Ricardo Tola -- residing at Chez. Mme. Benoit 70, Rue Vendome, Lyon.

Jose Arrospide Ferreyros -- residing at Fuertherstrasse 5-IV,
Berlin, W50.

Blanca Hildebrantd and son -- residing at Santa Margarita Ligaria,
via Minerva 5, Italy.

Misses Doris and Emelia Cano Pimentel -- residing in Paris.

Enrique Solari Swayne -- residing in Berlin.

Alfonso Menchaca and family -- Biarritz.

Luis Dibos -- Biarritz.

NOTE: This list is correct as of June 6, 1944 and
supersedes lists previously sent to the Department.

Enclosure No. 2 to despatch No. 790, July 7, 1944 from the Embassy, Lima.

MEMORANDUM

July 1, 1944.

Reference: Confidential instruction No. 3358, June 24, 1944, paragraph 4.

The Peruvian Government has repeatedly expressed its sympathy over the situation confronting persons held in German power or for that of refugees who have contrived to escape to unoccupied territory. However, the Peruvian Government is of the opinion that the essential situation of Peru has not changed in respect of immigration since 1933 when the view was expressed that this country could in general absorb solely agricultural immigrants.

While in June, 1944, the Foreign Office did assent to receive fifty French or Belgian children provided these were transported to Callao through some agency without responsibility of the Peruvian Government, it was at the same time stated that Peru did not possess organizational or institutional facilities to take care of refugees. Moreover, the Foreign Office has already denied the authenticity of the documentation of some forty-eight persons in German concentration camps understood to have been issued Peruvian papers through the agency of consular functionaries no longer in the Peruvian Foreign Service. The Peruvian Government has not received any information leading to a belief that other persons in German hands possess similar documentation. While the Peruvian Government is willing, should such cases be brought to its attention, to consider each on its merits, Peruvian authorities are unable to grant any blanket recognition of the validity of such documentation without prior examination, or to communicate with the German Government, through the Swiss Government or other agency, to demand that persons discovered with Peruvian passports should be entitled automatically to treatment as Peruvian citizens.

Jefferson Patterson.

Enclosure No. 3 to despatch No. 790, July 7, 1944, from the Embassy, Lima.

Reference to Previous Despatches, Airgrams and Telegrams

With reference to refugees:

Embassy's telegram No. 866 of June 28, 1944, 4:00 p.m. stating that Peruvian government will receive 50 refugee children of French and Belgian nationality.

Embassy's confidential despatch No. 711 of June 28, 1944, subject: "Bringing Refugee children from Europe into Peru."

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 9243 of March 16, 1944, subject: "Expression of view concerning attitude in south Peru regarding war refugees."

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 9203 of March 10, 1944, subject: "Oral expression of view by a Foreign Office official Concerning admissibility into Peru of war refugees."

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 9017 of February 11, 1944, subject: "Peruvian attitude toward rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution."

With reference to repatriation of Peruvians in Europe:

Embassy's airgram A-160 of February 11, 1944, 5:00 p.m.

Embassy's airgram A-614 of June 26, 1944, 5:00 p.m.

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 341 of May 19, 1944, subject: "Transmitting Foreign Office note relating to interest of Peruvian Government in additional exchanges of Peruvian nationals in German-occupied Europe."

Other despatches enclosing lists furnished by the Foreign Office of Peruvians who wished to be repatriated. These lists have been revised and only the one enclosed with the despatch to which this is attached is currently correct.

With reference to Germans in Peru who wish to return to Germany:

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 8355 of November 18, 1943, subject: "German Residents of Peru Express Desire to be Repatriated." (The figures given therein are no longer correct; see despatch to which this is attached.)

Embassy's strictly confidential despatch No. 8211 of October 29, 1943, subject: "Spanish Embassy Taking Census of Germans in Peru."

DOCUMENT

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Montevideo
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 16, 1944
NUMBER: 570

SECRET

1. Instructions substantially as suggested in circular airgram of May 11 were cabled to the Uruguayan Minister in Bern yesterday by the Foreign Office.

2. Sparks was orally informed by the undersecretary that the Department's approaching the German Government to initiate negotiations for exchange of nations for which these people will be eligible is approved by Uruguay.

3. There has not been received from Spain any inquiries regarding validity of documents. No information has been received by Foreign Office of any inquiries made by the Vatican. Should such inquiries be made, persons holding such documents will be presumed to be citizens of Uruguay, their status to be determined at a later date.

4. There have been received from International Red Cross inquiries regarding seven persons at Compiegne and fifteen at Vittel. When made, the reply will indicate that they are presumed to be citizens of Uruguay.

There was a delay in answering the Department's telegram of June 10, 1944 No. 335 because the Foreign Office official handling the matter was ill.

DAWSON

DOCUMENT

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AIRGRAM

BY SECRET COURIER

SECRET

Secretary of State,
Washington.
A-323, April 15, 3:10 p.m.

From Caracas
DATED: April 15, 1944
REC'D: April 22 4 p.m.

Having memorized the contents of Department's airgram of April 11, I took advantage of the first opportunity to discuss these matters orally with the Venezuelan Foreign Minister. I found him to be quite conversant with the situation and in entire sympathy with our aims. Dr. Parra-Perez informed me that he had already been approached on this subject by representatives of the Refugee Committee in London and the Belgium Government. He expressed approval of our desire to initiate negotiations for exchange on the basis indicated and promised full Venezuelan cooperation.

He said that he had received no inquiries through either Spanish or Swiss channels as to the validity of Venezuelan passports held by internees in occupied countries. He assured me that his Government would not "invalidate" any such passports even though under the strict letter of Venezuelan law governing issuance of passports their revalidation should become necessary by lapse of time. He also promised me that his government would affirmatively approach the German Government through the protecting power with a demand that the rights of individuals holding Venezuelan passports or claiming citizenship on the basis of consular documents be respected.

CORRIGAN

DOCUMENT

341

FROM: Secretary of State Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: July 21, 1944
NUMBER: 2490

SECRET

FOR McCLELLAND AND HARRISON

1. Please express to the Swiss Foreign Office the Department's and the Board's sincere appreciation for its cooperation and efforts as reflected in your 4223 of July 3. Please consult with appropriate officials of the Swiss Foreign Office in an urgent endeavor to secure their prompt further assistance by intervention and otherwise in rescuing the Malkowsky, Frumkin and Gerlin families from QUOTE general treatment accorded to eastern Jews UNQUOTE which according to your 4295 of July 6 and all other available information is but an euphemism for cold-blooded slaughter.

2. Please continue making representations in strongest terms on behalf of these families and all others to whom documents have been issued in the name of any American republic. It is considered by this Government that German action in declaring some documents invalid is arbitrary and inconsistent with generally accepted rule but the question as to validity of passports is to be determined by the Government in whose name they are issued, therefore only the government in whose name documents are issued can deny validity, not Germany. This Government furthermore considers untenable the distinction sought to be drawn between issuees of such documents who are not in internment camps and those issuees who are elsewhere, and this is without regard to whether such persons have a knowledge of Spanish or any other language or were settled in Poland or any other country. Accordingly, this Government takes a most serious view of German consignment of any persons to whom documents have been issued in the name of an American republic to the QUOTE general treatment accorded to eastern Jews UNQUOTE and must insist upon the return by the Germans to internment camps reserved for nationals of American republics of all persons to whom such documents have been issued who have been removed from such camps for consignment to such QUOTE treatment UNQUOTE or similar treatment.

3. Please endeavor through any unofficial channels that may be available to you to convey the sense of the following to appropriate German and satellite officials in foreign offices and foreign police: Foreign office and other officials who bear any responsibility for the consignment of persons to whom documents have been issued in the name of an American republic to the QUOTE general treatment accorded to eastern Jews UNQUOTE or similar treatment must expect personally to bear the consequences. If American republics, horrified by the bestiality and brutality of Nazi mass-slaughter accord to some persons the

protection of their passports or other documents, individual officials of the German and satellite foreign offices and foreign police ought to be anxious to avail themselves of such or any other opportunity to save innocent lives. If, instead, they indulge in fine reasoning and take action which is tantamount to sentencing such persons to persecution or death, they thereby assume the responsibility and invite the consequences therefor. Furthermore, their failure to seize every available opportunity to save lives will be considered as strong evidence of their concurrence with the policy of mass-slaughters of Jews and other civilian populations and their participation in such crimes, the consequences for which formed the subject of President Roosevelt's statement of March 24.

4. The Department and Board are confident that the Swiss Foreign Office recognizes that although the safety of citizens of the United States is the paramount concern of the American Government, the American people and Government are gravely concerned with the safety of the victims of Nazi persecution without regard to the nationality or stateless status of such victims. This grave concern has been manifested in many ways including the creation by the President of the War Refugee Board, and in the solemn warnings heretofore issued by President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Hull, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. As a consequence of this concern, and in view of Germany's open espousal of a policy of exterminating Jews and other civilian peoples, the Swiss Foreign Office will understand why this Government is unable to accept the German view that removal of persons claiming nationality of an American republic from internment camps for subjection to the QUOTE general treatment accorded to eastern Jews UNQUOTE involves merely QUOTE internal German police measures UNQUOTE. Knowing Switzerland's humanitarian traditions, the Department and Board are confident that the Swiss Foreign Office will find a way to intercede further on this score to secure from the Germans adequate assurances for the safety of all persons to whom passports and other documents have been issued in the name of an American republic whether such persons are in internment camps or elsewhere or have been in internment camps and removed therefrom. Please also request the Swiss to attempt again to secure for the Board a list of all those claiming nationality of an American republic who have been deported from Vittel and similar camps. Assume your airmail 8466, June 12, contains list of 238 names supplied by you to Swiss as well as list of 163 names supplied by Swiss consulate, Paris. The importance of securing such lists, as well as the taking of the other measures indicated herein is emphasized by the fact, called to your attention by the Department's 2046 of June 16, that Anna Frumkin is the wife, Hermine Frumkin, the daughter and Eugenia Gorlin, the sister of a citizen of the United States.

5. Regarding Section four your 4223, July 3, notice number two, Part E, this Government's position against German determination on

QUOTE merits of individual claims of persons holding United States or Latin American documentation UNQUOTE relates not (repeat not) to priority of exchange or method of selection of individuals to be exchanged, but rather to the recognition of persons making such claims as being eligible for exchange, and the extension to them of treatment to which nationals of countries of which they claim nationality are entitled.

6. Regarding notice number two, Part F, refer Department's 2407 of July 13, WRB's 64 and Department's 2316 of July 6, 1944, WRB's 71. Further efforts being made to obtain various governments protected by Switzerland or Spain to request suitable action in Bern or Madrid. But without awaiting such requests, efforts should be persistently continued to obtain results on basis of this Government's attitude, and of attitude of such governments as have already communicated with Switzerland. In this connection, please discuss with Swiss officials informally the desirability of construing as liberally as possible, and of acting as speedily as possible upon any communications from any American republic touching upon the protection of persons from cruelty and persecution. Swiss officials certainly understand that the sole object involved is to save people from unprecedented bestiality and that delays in action brought about by a strict adherence to technicalities proper enough under ordinary circumstances merely result in these extraordinary times, in an additional number of innocent people being ruthlessly done to death.

7. In view of the situation in Hungary, special efforts should be devoted to obtaining German and Hungarian assurances with regard to the protection, eligibility for exchange, etc., of any persons in Hungary to whom documents in the name of an American republic have been issued. You are authorized to request Swiss authorities to make all necessary representations to this effect. In this connection, note is taken of your recommendation in last paragraph of notice one of your 4223.

THIS IS WRB CABLE BERN NO. 78.

HULL

DOCUMENT

342

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: June 24, 1944
NUMBER: 2149

CONFIDENTIAL

The Department and the War Refugee Board are receiving reports indicating that there are held in camps situated in Germany and German-controlled territory, to which the protecting Powers and the International Red Cross have been granted no access or else such strictly limited forms of access that they have been unable effectively to assist the individuals in question, a number of unquestioned nationals and persons claiming the nationality of the United States and other American Republics. Belsen-Bergen near Hanover, Bergau near Dresden, Drancy near Paris and Theresienstadt are sites of such camps. Since late in 1943 the camp at Tost in Silesia appears to have been placed in this category. Possibly other camps of the same character exist.

The Swiss Government should be asked as protecting Power of the United States to investigate this situation. Please request it to endeavor to have its representatives visit the camps referred to for the purpose of investigating the claims of individuals held in these camps to citizenship of the United States or of other American Republics. Please make similar efforts regarding camps and other establishments which may exist in Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria or any other areas under control of German-dominated authorities.

Article 86 of the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention as applied to interned civilians by mutual agreement of the belligerents should be the base of the request to visit such camps. The extraordinary restrictions placed by the German authorities upon communications with these camps have deprived the persons detained there and the protecting Power of normal means of dealing with their claims to the protection of foreign states - hence in order to protect the vital interests of such detainees it is essential that visits be made to these camps. In this connection, reference is made to the case of Franz Kahn (Department's A-199, April 24 and previous) in which the extraordinary regulations attendant upon correspondence between him and the protecting Power have unjustifiably impeded the verification of his claim to American citizenship.

The International Red Cross Committee, despite extended efforts to visit the camps in question, has been unsuccessful in its exertions so far. Appreciation of the Department and the War Refugee Board for

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these efforts should be expressed. Also please express the hope that there will be no abatement of these efforts.

WRB CABLE NO. 36 TO BERN.

HULL

DOCUMENT

343

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: August 31, 1944
NUMBER: 5689

SECRET

In connection with first paragraph of Department's message of July 13, No. 2407, the following is contained in notice from Swiss dated August 26.

The difficulties encountered in efforts to safeguard bearers of identity documents issued in name of Latin American countries were described in recent report on situation in Germany concerning such individuals from Swiss Legation Berlin.

In particular, it seems that officials of Germany are starting to discriminate between passports issued for the purpose of safeguarding Jews against steps which might be taken against them and those held by individuals having citizenship of nations in question by birth.

The German authorities refuse right of interested individuals to claim Latin American citizenship not because of expiration validity of passports but because antecedents of Jews involved and type of identity papers which they have constitute adequate evidence that they obtained these papers "ad hoc" in the view of such authorities.

The continuation of these passports "ad hoc" is not the essential matter in the opinion of the Swiss Legation. They express the belief that it is fundamental that information as to the presence of these Latin American nationals who are not listed on its registers be furnished the Legation in some way. Inasmuch as holders of identity papers of this nature in many instances have not been reported to Swiss Legation, in the event German officials should ask if particular individual is among those protected by it, it might happen that the Swiss Legation would be unable to supply data concerning nationality claimed by interested individuals.

In order to expedite its representations to Government of Germany, Swiss Legation suggests that lists as complete as possible of bearers of these papers be prepared by governments in whose name identity papers are issued, accompanied with statement that these individuals are recognized as their citizens by these governments.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

344

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: September 14, 1944
NUMBER: 3180

CONFIDENTIAL

Following for McClelland.

1. Reference is made to your 5689 of August 31.

In replying to Swiss notice of August 26, please ask Swiss political department to emphasize that the German arguments notwithstanding, this Government is unable to recognize any right of the German authorities to pass upon the validity of documents issued in the names of other sovereign governments. Furthermore, none of the American republics upon whose documents this German procedure is being practiced can, in justice to their own proper interests, allow that practice to go unquestioned. Accordingly, this Government insists on the stand taken by it in Department's 2490 of July 21 paragraph two and rejects as irrelevant any attempt by German officials to question the validity of Latin American documents whether on the basis of antecedents of Jews involved or of the type of identity papers or on any other basis.

It should be emphasized in this connection that German attitude was at first to doubt the eligibility of persons involved for exchange and the acceptance of documents involved by issuing governments. Now that eligibility for exchange has been confirmed and the several issuing governments have notified Germany through protecting powers that the document holders must be protected notwithstanding any doubts as to the validity of the documents, German officials introduce new excuses for their failure to comply. All these excuses are emphatically rejected by this Government and the attention of German officials involved is drawn to the serious consequences of their attitude.

In this connection, please advise whether you have been able to convey to proper quarters the message contained in paragraph three of Department's 2490 of July 21. It is believed that in the light of the military situation it is possible to sway German officials by confronting them with a sufficiently emphatic statement of this Government's position.

With reference to lists of bearers of Latin American documents suggested in ultimate and penultimate paragraphs of your 5689, disturbed war conditions have interfered with communications between Latin American governments and their European missions, resulting in

incomplete records which make the compilation of such lists difficult. However, to assist the Swiss in this matter it is believed that the Legation should endeavor to obtain with the aid of McClelland and the local representatives of organizations that have records on the subject, lists which are as complete as possible with a view to transmitting them to the Swiss authorities. The Department will suggest to various Latin American governments the urgency of confirming to Swiss authorities the authenticity of such lists. It is hoped, however, that in view of the humanitarian considerations involved and of this country's status as Power handling exchange of persons whose eligibility would be established by being placed on the list, Swiss officials will agree to transmit the lists to Germany even without such confirmation. You may include in such lists the persons envisaged in Department's 2407 of July 13 paragraph numbered six.

Precaution should be taken, however, to inform Swiss and German authorities that such lists cannot be considered complete. Should Germany inquire of Swiss Legation or government whether any particular individual not appearing on such lists is protected by Switzerland, it is suggested that an answer along the following lines would be both substantially correct and calculated to save human lives: Owing to wartime conditions, Swiss records regarding citizens of countries under Swiss protection are incomplete and so are records of several Latin American legations in Bern; if Germany would inform Switzerland of the claimed nationality of the person involved, inquiry will be made of the government of the country concerned; and the Swiss will consider it understood that pending receipt of an answer to such inquiry such person will be treated as and accorded all the rights and privileges of a citizen of the country whose nationality he claims.

2. The following information received from Amembassies in various countries is transmitted for McClelland's information and guidance in connection with protection of victims of enemy persecution, representation in Hungary, and shelters for Jewish children from Hungary:

Portuguese government is in agreement in principle to admit for temporary refuge Hungarian Jewish refugees, preferably in lots of three to four hundred. Portuguese government has already informed Hungarian government of its interest in such people. It has persuaded Hungarian government to issue exit visas and has itself given Portuguese visas to a number of them, but Germans have refused to permit them to leave as yet. Some of these persons are now in asylum in the Portuguese legation in Hungary. The Hungarian government is thus aware of the Portuguese interest in this problem.

Venezuelan government has authorized its legation in Lisbon to visa the passports of Jewish refugees, especially children, who are traveling to the American continent, even though they may not be proceeding to Venezuelan territory. It has also requested the Swiss Political Department to extend the protection of Venezuelan interests

to Hungarian territory and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe for the purpose of aiding the bearers of Venezuelan passports in those regions.

President Vargas of Brazil has approved the plan to bring 500 refugee children to Brazil, provided that the Brazilian Government would not incur the expenses of transportation to and maintenance in Brazil. He has accordingly charged General Ivo Soares, Chairman of the Brazilian Red Cross, with making suitable arrangements with appropriate Jewish welfare agencies in Brazil to take care of them. Official announcement is to follow shortly.

Government of Uruguay has agreed to the admittance of 500 refugee children.

3. With reference to Department's 2485 of July 21, Haitian Legation in Bern was instructed on July 31 to request the Swiss to present to the German Government the following declaration of the Haitian Government:

QUOTE Inasmuch as a certain number of individuals of the Jewish race naturalized as Haitians abroad in pursuance of the Decree-Law of May 29, 1939, were living in territories controlled by Germany and Italy; that they have been detained there continuously for reasons of force majeure since the declaration of war by the Republic of Haiti until this date, the Haitian Government declares: that the persons in the above-mentioned category have been unable to comply with the Decree-Law of February 4, 1942, enjoining, under penalty of the loss of Haitian nationality, all those who had acquired Haitian naturalization abroad to return to Haiti before August 5, 1942. Consequently, it is hereby made known to whom it may concern that the said persons are not affected by the Decree-Law of February 4, 1942. UNQUOTE

In this connection, the Board's attention has been called to the test case of Mrs. Zelman Solowiejczyk, age 42, and Miss Sephora Solowiejczyk, age 7, whose last known address was Jacob Jacobs Street 37, Antwerp, Belgium, and who are the wife and daughter of Zelman Solowiejczyk, now residing in New York City. Under the foregoing declaration, these women, whose Haitian naturalization is said to have been promulgated in the Moniteur of Haiti on December 23, 1939, retain their Haitian nationality. Please take all appropriate action to insure that these women, if still in German hands, be treated as Haitian nationals. Consult with Haitian Minister if you deem it advisable.

The Haitian Legation has also been instructed not to question at present the validity of Haitian passports held by persons who are now in occupied territories and who could be the object of persecution by

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the enemy until such persons arrive in a place of safety and to inform the Federal Department of these instructions.

This is WRB cable to Bern No. 164.

HULL

DOCUMENT

345

HM-394
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern
Dated November 18, 1944
Rec'd. 1:57 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

7613, November 18, 10 a.m.

Pursuant to fourth paragraph Department's 3180, September 14 (WRB 164) Legation forwarded to Swiss Foreign Office with communication dated October 24 two partial lists of persons claiming Latin American citizenship supplied by private organizations. Swiss were requested to take action desired by you except that Legation asked that persons claiming Argentine nationality be excluded and that Swiss Legation Berlin should inform Spanish Embassy there of presence on lists of persons claiming Paraguayan citizenship.

Swiss notice Nov. 10 states that Foreign Office following careful examination has decided to forward lists in question to Swiss Legation Berlin for its information but observes that these lists prepared by private organizations cannot serve as basis for establishing right of any person to claim nationality of a Latin American republic until these lists be officially confirmed by interested countries.

As regards Paraguayan citizens appearing on these lists Swiss Foreign Office prefers that their names be communicated directly to Spanish Government for transmission Spanish Embassy Berlin. END SUMMARY.

In view limited use to which Swiss are willing put lists of this character, Legation is forwarding to Department the two lists mentioned above pursuant to Department's statement that it will suggest to the various governments of Latin America urgency of confirming to Swiss authorities authenticity of such lists (paragraph four, Department's 3180) September 14. It is also forwarding to you in this connection two supplemental lists now received from private organizations without prior reference to Swiss.

When Department and WRB receive and review lists which are being forwarded, please instruct whether they are considered sufficiently definite and useful to justify continued compilation of similar lists by private organizations.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

346

A-253

SECRET

5:20 PM

Sept. 13, 1944

AMEMBASSY
ASUNCION (PARAGUAY)

The following is from War Refugee Board.

Reference is made to our earlier communications on the subject of holders of Latin American documents in enemy territory.

At the suggestion of Swiss authorities, and in order to safeguard the lives of holders of documents issued in the names of American republics in German-controlled territory, this Government is endeavoring to compile lists of such holders for transmission to the German Government. A portion of a cable dated September 14, 1944, to the Legation at Bern follows:

QUOTE With reference to lists of bearers of Latin American documents suggested in ultimate and penultimate paragraphs of your 5689, disturbed war conditions have interfered with communications between Latin American governments and their European missions, resulting in incomplete records which make the compilation of such lists difficult. However, to assist the Swiss in this matter it is believed that the Legation should endeavor to obtain with the aid of McClelland and the local representatives of organizations that have records on the subject, lists which are as complete as possible with a view to transmitting them to the Swiss authorities. The Department will suggest to various Latin American governments the urgency of confirming to Swiss authorities the authenticity of such lists. It is hoped, however, that in view of the humanitarian considerations involved and of this country's status as Power handling exchange of persons whose eligibility would be established by being placed on the list, Swiss officials will agree to transmit the lists to Germany even without such confirmation.
UNQUOTE.

Please discuss this matter with the Government to which you are accredited with a view of obtaining its confirmation of the authenticity of the list submitted by the Legation at Bern.

In making this request, you may explain that the assurances previously given on behalf of this Government that the government to which you are accredited will not be expected to grant physical admission to the persons involved and that no objection will be raised to an examination by that government of status of such persons once they are safe from enemy persecution, fully apply to the persons whose names will be included on the lists herein envisaged.

Should the government to which you are accredited, in addition to sending such communication, be in a position itself to compile and submit to Spain a list of holders of documents issued in its name or other persons under enemy control to whom it desires to give protection, this Government would be glad to extend to such persons the benefit of its activities intended to safeguard their lives. If desired, this Government will gladly transmit any such list to the Spanish Government.

Sent to Asuncion. Copy to La Paz, Bolivia.

HULL

AM-77 Please send copy to La Paz, Bolivia

WRB:MMV:OMH

9/16/44

RPA

NC

SWP

DOCUMENT

347

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: July 13, 1944
NUMBER: 2407

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR ATTENTION OF MINISTER HARRISON AND MCCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND.

Reference is made to your 3871 of June 17. Please express Board's sincere appreciation to Foreign Office for its cooperation. The Board recognizes Switzerland's deep concern for the fate of victims of Nazi persecution and is confident that continued efforts of Swiss and American Governments must result in some degree of success.

1. In regard to renewal of passports held by persons in enemy territory, United States practice, as you are aware, is not to authorize their extension beyond their two-year period of validity. Nevertheless, Swiss authorities issue Swiss certificates of identity to holders of such passports. It is suggested that a similar practice, if necessary, be adopted in the case of passports issued in the names of other American republics whose interests are protected in enemy territory by Switzerland. The suggestion is based on the premise that while a passport's duration as a travel document is limited to the period of its validity, its value as *prima facie* evidence of nationality continues. Accordingly, it is our understanding that the request to Switzerland to extend protective action to all persons threatened with enemy persecution who hold passports and other documents issued in the name of the American republics until affirmatively advised to the contrary by the government concerned applies without regard to the time-limit indicated in any such passport. It is greatly hoped that, in the interest of avoiding delay, the Swiss can carry out the foregoing without communicating further with any of the governments concerned. Kindly advise concerning such governments and the changes of procedure needed to achieve the foregoing, however, if the Swiss cannot secure this result without instructions from the governments whose passports were issued.

Please discuss this matter with appropriate Swiss authorities and endeavor to secure their cooperation in developing some procedure that will assure the continued protection of holders of expired Latin American passports regardless of their extension.

2. It is understood that Paraguay requested Spain in May to extend protection to all holders of Paraguayan documents. Spanish assistance in bringing about the return of deportees from Vittel was

requested by United States and certain other American republics. On April 19 Spanish Government assured us that it would attempt to learn the facts as soon as possible with a view toward endeavoring to arrange for the return of these refugees. Early in June, Spanish Foreign Minister, in reply to request by Nicaragua, offered to use his good offices to secure the return to Vittel of any bearers of Nicaraguan passports who might have been removed therefrom.

3. Please request assistance of Swiss authorities in ascertaining identity and whereabouts of all persons removed from Compiegne and Vittel and other civilian internment camps who hold passports or other documents issued in the name of any American republic, and their best efforts to secure the return of such persons to such camps.

4. Note is taken of German readiness to consider as eligible for exchange against Germans desiring to be repatriated all Jews interned in these camps who bear Latin American identity documents as well as those elsewhere known to the German Foreign Office, and of German readiness to accept the recognition by the United States of the status of such persons as a basis for their treatment and eligibility for exchange. It is consequently assumed that German authorities will henceforth refrain from passing on the validity of Latin American documents. Please confirm. It would also appear that United States recognition of status will alone suffice, and affirmative approaches by individual Latin American countries are not considered essential by Germans. On the assumption that we properly state German attitude, please explore with Swiss authorities the possibility of proceeding on this basis. We assume Swiss are fully aware of circumstances making action on this basis desirable in speedily achieving humanitarian results.

5. Honduras and Costa Rica have authorized this government to transmit to Switzerland their demands that persons holding passports issued in their names be protected. Refer to Department's 1632 of May 10 concerning Honduras, and 1993 of June 10 concerning Costa Rica, which we assume you have transmitted to appropriate Swiss authorities. A similar communication from Guatemala is on its way to you.

This government has been informed that a telegram was sent by Ecuador to Swiss Government early in May requesting safeguarding of persons claiming Ecuadorean nationality. It is also understood that similar instructions, with regard to persons holding Uruguayan documents, were cabled from Montevideo to Uruguayan Minister at Bern on June 15.

6. In connection with persons eligible for exchange, your attention is drawn to the problem of persons in enemy-controlled areas in whose names Latin American documents have been issued, but who are not in physical possession of these documents because delivery has been impossible. In order that such persons may not be placed at any

disadvantage because of circumstance beyond their control, please secure from available sources names, ages and last known addresses of such persons. On this subject please consult Sternbuch, Riegner, Saly Mayer, and other representatives of rescue organizations. Please notify Board when such list is secured, giving your views and informal opinion of Swiss authorities as to the advisability of making the same available to the Germans in an effort to protect such persons.

7. Please note that the term QUOTE German-controlled UNQUOTE territory or areas as used in this message and in all other communications dealing with protection of persons holding documents issued in the names of American republics includes Hungary. Should there be any possibility of doubt on this score, the Swiss authorities should be informed accordingly and requested to transmit said information to German and Hungarian authorities. In this connection, you are requested to inquire and report which American republics, if any, other than the United States, are represented in Hungary and Switzerland.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 64.

HULL

DOCUMENT

CIRCULAR AIRGRAM

SECRET BY COURIER

August 1, 1944

August 3, 1944

11:00 am

SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING OF LIVES OF AMERICAN REPUBLICS
DOCUMENT HOLDERS

TO CERTAIN AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS:

Please refer to previous communications regarding persons affiliated with persecuted European groups in enemy controlled areas holding documents issued in the names of American republics and efforts to safeguard their lives. Intense persecution of such groups, including forced deportation and mass extermination has been introduced into Hungary, where persons holding documents issued in the names of American republics are reported to be in danger because of absence of representation in that country. Amlegation Bern cables:

QUOTE With regard to general question of Latin American documentation in German controlled countries, the suggestion that such Latin American Governments as have not previously made arrangements for their interests in Hungary to be taken care of urgently ask Switzerland or other neutral country to assume such representation is made by the Legation for the consideration of the Department. All Latin American countries without direct representation in Hungary except Uruguay, Chile, Brazil and possibly El Salvador, would seem to be concerned in this. UNQUOTE

Please consult appropriate officials of the Foreign Office in an endeavor urgently to secure representation in Hungary by Switzerland for the Government to which you are accredited. Although such government's interest in Hungary may be nominal, its representation in Hungary preferably by Switzerland is an essential first step to the humanitarian effort to save the lives of persons there holding documents issued in such government's name, and the approach to the Foreign Office should be on that basis. If the government to which you are accredited agrees to this measure, please request it to instruct the protecting power substantially as follows: (1) Passports and other documents issued in its name to persons in Hungary subject to persecution, are recognized and confirmed; (2) Hungarian Government to so be advised and that it is expected that persons holding such passports and other documents will be accorded the treatment, rights, privileges, and immunities of nationals of the government to which you are accredited, and (3) the United States is authorized to negotiate for the exchange of such persons. You may assure the Foreign Office that

in the event of such negotiation every preference will be given by the United States to unquestioned nationals of the government to which you are accredited, and that such government will not be expected physically to receive other persons, who, if exchanged, will be routed to other havens.

If desired this Government would be willing to act as a channel of communication in representation matters between it and the Swiss or other neutral Government to which it wishes to entrust its interests in Hungary.

Please advise the Department promptly of the results of your approaches.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)
ghs

Send to AMEMBASSY

"	La Paz	Bolivia
"	San Jose	Costa Rica
"	Quito	Ecuador
"	Guatemala	Guatemala
"	Port-au-Prince	Haiti
"	Tegucigalpa	Honduras
"	Managua	Nicaragua
"	Asuncion	Paraguay
"	San Salvador	El Salvador
"	Caracas	Venezuela

DOCUMENT

349

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: October 5, 1944
NUMBER: 3427

SECRET

TO MINISTER HARRISON AND MCCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND.

With reference to your 6292 of September 22, you may request Swiss Foreign Office to inform Hungarian authorities that, if they so desire, this government will be glad to treat as a Hungarian national any person in the United States who claims Hungarian nationality even if the claim of such person to Hungarian nationality is not well established, and thus permit him to benefit from protection of State representing Hungarian interests.

This government assumes that other American republics will also accede to such a request, in case Hungarian authorities are really desirous of making it.

Please convey to Hungarian officials through such informal channels as may be available to you that this Government views the Hungarian inquiry as specious in view of the circumstances and considers it to have been made in an endeavor to gain time. Such officials should be advised that this Government will hold them personally accountable for any harm that may befall any person claiming the nationality of an American republic as the result of the Hungarian government's failure to accord him the rights and privileges due to a national of an American republic. In this connection, you should also convey to appropriate Hungarian quarters the sense of Department's 2490 of July 21 paragraph three.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 191.

HULL

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DOCUMENT

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JMM-835

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (SECRET 0)

Bern

Dated October 19, 1944
Rec'd. 6:10 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

6938, October 19, 6 p.m.

FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND.

Sternbuch informs me that courier recently arrived Switzerland
from Bratislava reports that 300 to 400 Jews holding Latin American
documents arrested in Bratislava were first interned as result
intervention Central Jewish office at Mariathal near Bratislava.
On or about October 8 they were summarily transported, it is
believed to Germany. (Courier declared that Slovak Government
knows where they have been taken. Apparently about 90 were
bearers El Salvador nationality certificates balance Paraguayan
passports. Legation's 6839 October 13.)

Would it be possible through Vatican and Papal Nunciature
at Bratislava determine destination this group with view to
ultimately requesting Swiss and Spaniards once group is located,
exercise protection?

Repeated to Ackermann of WRB care Ampolad.

HARRISON

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: September 20, 1944
NUMBER: 3245

CONFIDENTIAL

To Minister Harrison and McClelland, Bern, Switzerland.

With reference to persistent reports of renewed or impending deportations of Jews from Hungary and Slovakia by order of German authorities, you are requested to convey to German authorities through official Swiss channels this Government's most emphatic protest against these deportations and its unflinching determination to see to it that all persons participating in any form whatsoever in these deportations or in any other forms of persecution in Hungary or Slovakia will be apprehended and punished.

In this connection, and referring to ultimate paragraph your 5109 of August 8, attention of German authorities should also be called to position of this Government with respect to deportations from recognized civilian internment camps of persons holding documents issued in the name of American Republics. Unless all such persons are immediately returned to civilian internment camps supervised by Intercross, the German authorities responsible will be held strictly accountable.

In addition, the strongest possible unofficial representations on both points should be made to appropriate individual German officials through all channels that may be available to you.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 178

HULL

DOCUMENT

LC-594
Distribution of
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special arrangement.
(SECRET W)

Bern
Dated November 15, 1944
Rec'd 6:12 a.m., 16th

Secretary of State,
Washington.

7542, November 15, 3 p.m.

Department's 3245, September 20 - WRB 178.

Foreign Office note November 8 which was personally handed same day to Legation secretary by Depury states in substance following.

During interview of Feldscher the latter declared he had been instructed to return these two notes (Legation forwarded by note dated September 23, to Foreign Office substance of first and second paragraph your 3245. Foreign Office transmitted these to Swiss Legation Berlin by two separate notes each enclosing text in English as received from Legation).

According to Sethe the German Government does not (repeat not) recognize right of American Government to undertake representations in these two cases matters do not (repeat not) concern protection of American nationals and additionally it considers tone of these notes unacceptable particularly threat contained in latter part of paragraph one your 3245.

Since German Government does not recognize right of Swiss representatives as representing American Interests to intervene in favor of bearers of Latin American identity documents (note here refers to Foreign Office note of September 5 with enclosures which were transmitted to Department with Legation's strictly confidential despatch 9250 September 15). Feldscher inquires whether he should nevertheless bring to attention of German Foreign Office four points contained in Legation's notice of October 31 to Swiss Foreign Office (first paragraph Department's 3648, October 26) concerning deportation bearers documents this category previously interned Marianka in Slovakia. In view Sethe's declaration Foreign Office sees no useful purpose in delivering to German Foreign Office a note based upon Legation's notice of October 31 acceptance of which without any doubt will be refused. Foreign Office accordingly gave instructions to Feldscher not to pursue the matter. End summary.

Legation continued its negotiations with Division of Foreign Interests after said meeting with Depury and these concluded in discussion with him on November 13 at which time he agreed to have Swiss Legation Berlin approach German authorities pursuant first paragraph

Department's 3648 as applied to bona fide United States Nationals and similar nationals of Latin American countries represented by Switzerland.

At meeting of November 13 Legation Secretary was handed notice dated November 10 with reference to Grassli's proposals which were subject of Legation's note dated November 9 to Swiss based Department's 3769 November 4. Said notice includes following observations:

(1). German refusal accept notes of Swiss Legation Berlin based on fact that German Government contests right of American Government to make representations in matter pertaining to bearers of Latin American documents.

(2). Grassli nevertheless insists that persons claiming and actually possessing United States nationality are held in Slovak concentration camps. It is possible that German authorities would not refuse a representation made not concerning bearers of Latin American documents but regarding persons claiming United States nationality.

(3). However procedure suggested by Grassli would involve instructing Swiss Legation Berlin to intervene with German Government regarding action taken by German Government authorities in Slovakia -- provided it be limited to United States citizens properly speaking -- but requesting German Government to surrender Jews concerned to Slovak Government. Swiss observe that such action might be interpreted as implying recognition of Slovak state and request Department's comment. End summary.

Since receipt of foregoing Legation communication to Swiss contents Department's 3852 November 11 and in view above summarized Swiss comments would appreciate Department's observations as to whether and on what basis Swiss should be requested further to pursue Grassli's suggestions.

HARRISON

WSB

DOCUMENT

353

MB

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

December 8, 1944
9 p.m.

AMLEGATION
BERN

4154

The substance of your 7542 of November 15 and 7668 of November 21 has been carefully studied by the Board and the Department. As indicated in Department's 3255 of September 21, item three, the Board is of the view that the transmission by the protecting power of messages regarding the mistreatment of victims of enemy persecution serves a useful purpose regardless of whether the enemy government "accepts" the message in any formal sense. However, if certain terminology in the Department's telegrams requesting that such messages be transmitted is known to the Swiss to be definitely unacceptable to the Germans and likely to defeat the objective of the Department and the Board, which is to save the lives of unfortunate individuals, it is requested that the Swiss use their best discretion in the matter. Other channels are available for communication of the omitted passages or phrases.

In view of this Government's stand regarding holders of documents issued in the names of American Republics, which is shared by the Inter-American Advisory Committee for Political Defense, the Department and the Board do not accept any German refusal to receive communications in matters pertaining to bearers of Latin American documents. Further, in addition to existing efforts, since each of the Latin American nations has a protecting power for the German Government, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain or Portugal, it is possible for these protecting powers in view of the general responsibility devolving upon them in that capacity to concert measures at Berlin to save lives of persons whose existence is threatened. If the Swiss feel they can not speak up in behalf of human beings whose governments they do not represent, there is no reason why they should not exercise a humanitarian initiative to obtain concerted protective action along the lines suggested by the United States Government by all the protecting powers. The United States Government appreciate and will be eager to support any such Swiss move.

There is a definite reason why the United States Government appears so frequently as spokesman for the other American Republics in these matters. It has the best sources of information and with this responsibility can not await multiple transmissions of communications to various governments before initiating remedial

measures. It is furthermore clearly established on the basis of Resolution XXIV of the Committee for Political Defense and through communications exchanged with the various American Republics that none of the other American Republics is willing to accept German infringement of its sovereignty which is constituted by German decisions regarding the validity of its documents of nationality. The protecting powers are all aware of this position and should not need added instructions from the represented powers in order effectively to maintain the protection of bearers of these documents.

This Government of course has a special interest in citizens and claimants to citizenship of the United States and you are authorized to urge or request the Swiss authorities accordingly, unless that has already been done, in line with the fifth paragraph of your 7542 describing action which the Swiss were to take with respect to those whom they consider to be bona fide United States and Latin American nationals represented by Switzerland. It is hoped that that action has been taken. However, the Department and the Board wish to point out that since the Swiss have been arbitrarily deprived by the Germans of contact with many of the individuals whose lives are in the greatest danger they are not able to perceive how the Swiss can determine which of these individuals are bona-fide nationals. If without such contact the Swiss should undertake to accept the German determination they would be accepting a grave responsibility.

The German Government is willing enough to accept representations of the United States Government in behalf of the other American Republics whether or not represented by Switzerland, when by doing so it obtains an advantage in the return of its nationals to Germany in exchange. Germany's failure at this late date to recognize the interest of this Government in claimants of nationality of the American Republics and its justification in making representations concerning matters affecting their availability for exchange is entirely inconsistent. The United States Government can not accept this German point of view. Moreover, Germany's attitude in the light of your 7616 of November 18 is not likely to prove inflexible in practice even if it remains so in negotiations.

There appears to be some misinterpretation attached to the Swiss attitude in the matter of the Americans and Latin Americans removed from Slovakia discussed in your 7163 of October 28, penultimate paragraph of your 7542, and the Department's 3769 of November 4 and 3852 of November 11, 1944. The Department and the Board understood that Grassli's proposal called for an approach to the German Government as the power responsible for the transfer of the Americans and Latin Americans held in Slovakia and that he intended the Swiss Government, on its own initiative, as a good

office in behalf of both belligerents and in the effort to solve the impasse which might otherwise arise, to suggest to the Germans as a possible solution to the difficulty the return of these individuals to Slovakia. In its 3769, the Department therefore concurred in his proposal. In its 3852 requesting the Swiss to take definite action, it made the request extend only so far as this Government could speak in the matter without extending recognition to Slovakia. Your 7802 of November 28 covers only eight of at least 150 Americans understood to have been held at Marianka. If this figure represents the total number of American citizens of Jewish race remaining alive in Slovakia, numbers of American citizens have disappeared.

To make the matter clear, the Department would be glad if the Swiss could continue with the implementation of Grassli's proposal to the extent that is compatible with pending exchange proposals. The extent to which the Swiss can speak for the United States Government in making this proposal was defined in Department's 3852 and the Department notes with gratitude that they have done so and further that they have induced the Germans to consider the exchange of at least eight of the Americans concerned. The remaining elements of the proposal can only be implemented by the Swiss on their own initiative through good offices as a friendly neutral intermediary.

If there were at Marianka or at Sered nationals of the American Republics not represented by Switzerland, the Department and the Board would appreciate if in addition to the action suggested in the foregoing paragraph the Swiss would inform the Department urgently so that the appropriate protecting powers may be asked to take parallel measures in their behalf.

STETTIN IUS
(GLW)

AMT

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (RESTRICTED)

November 11, 1944
Midnight

Amlegation
Bern

3852

Department informed that German authorities in Slovakia have begun evacuation from a camp at Marianka of Jews who claim nationality of United States and of other American Republics. Persons being removed are reported to be destined to Auschwitz.

Please request Swiss to inform German Government that United States Government expects urgently to obtain assurances that the German authorities in Slovakia have not taken any action against claimants to citizenship of the United States which deprived them of any of the rights to which they are entitled. If any claimants to citizenship of the United States have been deprived of such rights or have been removed from Slovakia to some other area under German control, German Government should provide the names of the persons concerned and information regarding their whereabouts and welfare.

Telegraph pertinent developments.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)
(BL)

840.48 Refugees/9-2744
SWP:EJD:MA

DOCUMENT

355

TELEGRAM SENT

GMY

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (SC-OO)

April 21, 1944

1 p.m.

Secret

Amembassy,
Madrid
1108

For the Ambassador from War Refugee Board.

The Spanish Government has on several occasions in the past, as the result of intercession by the Holy See whose humanitarian efforts on behalf of the persecuted refugees of Europe have resulted in the saving of thousands of lives, extended protection to groups of Sephardic Jews in Axis occupied areas and has intervened with Germany to accomplish their evacuation to Spain after release from concentration camps.

The War Refugee Board has now been informed that 400 such Sephardic Jews residing in Athens have recently been interned in a concentration camp. To forestall deportation to Poland and almost certain death it is vital that these Sephardic Jews be given Spanish protection.

You are requested to approach appropriate Spanish officials to advise them of the situation of this group and to enlist the aid of the Spanish Government in the rescue of these refugees. You are authorized to give full assurance to the Spanish Government that funds will be available for the support in Spain of such of these persons as may be evacuated to Spain and that prompt action to speed their departure from Spain to other places of refuge will be taken. Kindly advise the Department of all developments in this matter.

The foregoing has been repeated to Bern for Tittman.

HULL

DOCUMENT

356

ML
Distribution of
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special arrangement.
(Secret W)

September 11, 1944
10 p.m.

War Refugee Board
Amembassy
Madrid
2519

Department and War Refugee Board are advised that there are in camp Pergenbelsen near Hanover about 155 Sephardic Jews having Spanish passports whose entry into Spain has been promised by the Spanish Government and for whom, it is understood, exit permits are now available.

In view of imminent danger to lives of these persons, you are requested to intercede with Spanish government to bring about their release and admission into Spain. Assurances previously given regarding speedy evacuation of refugees from Spanish territory fully apply to these persons.

Should transportation be impossible in view of military developments, please urge Spanish Government to exercise greatest possible vigilance in safeguarding the lives of these persons, by placing them under direct protection of Spanish diplomatic or consular personnel and by all other appropriate methods.

MULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

35

EE-211

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement (Secret W)

Madrid

DATED: November 3, 1944
REC'D: 6:30 p.m. 4th

Secretary of State,
Washington.
3640, November 3, 9 a.m.

Department will see from my despatch 3169 October 2 that Embassy on its own initiative suggested to Spanish Government on September 25 desirability of latter's endeavoring to arrange for temporary entry into Switzerland of 155 Sephardic Jews mentioned in Department's 2904 October 28. Foreign Office official states that instructions in pursuance of Embassy's suggestion have already been sent to Berlin and are being sent also to Spanish Minister in Bern.

HAYES

DOCUMENT

358

EMBASSY OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

UNRESTRICTED
Dispatch No. 653

Lisbon, June 28, 1944

Subject: Care of Sephardic Jews now in Greece
Claiming Portuguese Nationality

The Honorable
The Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a translation of a note sent by the Portuguese Foreign Office the 24th of June in reply to an aide-memoire left with it following a visit by the attaché of this Embassy representing the War Refugee Board. The interest which the Portuguese Government has taken in the situation of these Sephardic Jews will be noted. This visit was made following receipt of several telegrams from Washington urging this Embassy to take up the matter covered in the notes with the Portuguese Government. The results, as indicated in the note enclosed, are highly gratifying and it is hoped will obtain an alleviation of the condition of these people.

There is also enclosed a translation of a note sent by the Papal Nuncio to the Foreign Office on the same subject. Presumably this note also had its effect in obtaining the favorable action taken by the Portuguese Government. This Embassy was requested by the Nunciatur /sic/ to explain to it the request which they had received from Rome, and as a result their note, copy of which is enclosed, was sent to the Foreign Office.

Provided that the Department perceives no objection, it would be appreciated if a copy of this despatch together with copies of the notes enclosed were forwarded to John W. Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board.

Enclosures:

1. Translation letter from Foreign Office
2. Translation letter to Foreign Office from Papal Nuncio.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
(Signed)

EDWARD S. CROCKER

Edward S. Crocker
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure No. 1 to Dispatch No. 653
from Lisbon dated June 28, 1944.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The following is a translation of a note from the Apostolic Nuncio in Portugal, written in response to a request from this Embassy for the support of the Nuncio in regard to securing the protection of the Portuguese Government to claimants of Portuguese citizenship of Jewish race who were threatened with deportation to Poland. At the same time, as may be noted, a note was received from the Secretary of State of the Pope by the Nuncio asking for similar action.

Note 4882

The Papal Nuncio presents his compliments to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and has the honor to bring to his attention the following facts:

1. The Papal Nuncio has received instructions from his Eminence, Cardinal Maglione, Secretary of State of His Holiness the Pope, asking the Nuncio to intervene in his official capacity with the Portuguese Government in favor of a group of non-Aryans, resident in Greece, who claim to be originally Portuguese citizens and who are now in danger of being deported to Poland.
2. The Nuncio has been advised that an intervention in favor of this same group was made by the Embassy of the United States in Lisbon by note under date of the ninth of May.
3. The Nuncio urges the Portuguese Government, in view of its well known humanitarian sentiments, which during the war has given comfort and salvation to so many people, to come once more to the aid of this particular group whose situation is so serious. The Nuncio cannot help but anticipate from the Portuguese Government the most favorable response to this request and thanks the Portuguese Government in advance for its cordial cooperation in this humanitarian effort.

Enclosure No. 2 to Dispatch No. 653
from Lisbon dated June 28, 1944.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TRANSLATION

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Direccao Geral dos
Negocios Politicos e da Adminis-
tracao Interna

Proc. 32,61

No. 15

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received with the interest it deserved the suggestion of the United States Government, transmitted by its Embassy in the "Aide Memoire" of the 9th of May, referring to the Israelites of Greece of presumed Portuguese nationality who seem to be at present in a painful situation, under the menace of imminent danger.

2. - The Portuguese Government, faithful to the principles of humanity that in all cases have guided it, never failed to render all possible assistance to the Jews who, on the basis of nationality, appealed for its protection.

3. - This, therefore, is what is happening to the Jews in Greece and for this reason, before having received any appeal from those interested, the Portuguese Government had, in due course, sent instructions to the Legation in Berlin to take steps for the repatriation of non-Aryans residing in the above country, who might be considered Portuguese citizens.

4. - Doubts and deficiencies in proving the claims of nationality of these Israelites, delayed however the settlement of the matter. But in view of the very alarming news brought to the attention of the Portuguese Government, it has decided to authorize the entry into Portugal of those who have any basis for claiming Portuguese nationality; when they are in the country the question of proof can then be carefully considered.

5. - The Portuguese Government has taken good note of the generous offer of the American Government to provide maintenance and the definite future provision of the refugees outside of Portugal.

6. - That offer, which is duly appreciated, will be accepted

by the Portuguese Government only in the cases of Israelites who prove not to be its nationals.

Lisbon, June 24th, 1944.

DOCUMENT

359

Plain
Lisbon
DATED: April 20, 1944
REC'D: 3:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
1176, Twentieth, 11 a.m.

Following message is from Joseph Schwartz for War Refugee Board and Leavitt, Joint Distribution Committee, New York.

"Barlas supplies following figures concerning emigration services from Turkey to Palestine from December 1943 to March 31, 1944. Local Turkish residents 1084 of whom 194 required assistance. From Bulgaria 276 including 46 children who arrived in March. From Hungary 169, from Greece 176, from Rumania 285, which includes 239 SS MILCA passengers who arrived March. Financial statements not yet ready but will advise as soon as available. Thus far Turkish repatriates arriving from France No. 340 of whom 175 receiving assistance which over a period of 6 weeks amounted 14,000 Turkish pounds. Resnik advises passengers boarding both steamships MILCA and MARITZA at Constanza were required to pay fantastic sums."

NORWEB

DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

360



C
O
P
Y

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 3, 1944

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Permit me to draw your urgent attention to the desperate plight of a large number of Jews claiming Turkish nationality who are in France and other areas under German control. It is understood that the Turkish Government has recognized some of these claims but that in most cases no action has as yet been taken with the result that some of the persons involved have already been transported to Poland and almost certain death. Information now available to the Board indicates that an additional group of approximately 800 Jews claiming Turkish nationality are in imminent danger of deportation from France to Poland.

It is understood that Turkish consuls in France have forwarded a list of these persons to Ankara for confirmation of their status, but that as yet no determination has been made by the Turkish Government. While the Board recognizes that the determination of these claims is a matter solely within the province of the Government of Turkey, the Board feels constrained to address you on this subject because it is the established policy of this Government to take all measures within its power, consistent with the successful prosecution of the war, to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

We appreciate that the investigation of these claims to Turkish nationality must necessarily take considerable time. It is feared, however, that pending such investigations, the claimants, or a number of them, are likely to be deported. For this reason, we suggest that the Turkish Government might find it appropriate to advise German and other authorities in France that upon the assertion of a claim to Turkish nationality, the claimant is to be extended all the rights, privileges and immunities of a Turkish national unless and until, after investigation, the Turkish Government advises such authorities that it has rejected such claim. The Government of the United States has taken that position with respect to refugees within German-controlled areas claiming American citizenship.

It is sincerely hoped that the Turkish Government will find it appropriate to take the position above suggested and otherwise to extend its protection to victims of German oppression in France and elsewhere. Thus, the Board has been informed that many of these claimants

to Turkish nationality are Turkish born and that the validity of their claims may often depend upon an interpretation of their acts since leaving Turkey in the light of the Turkish Nationality Law. In view of the dire consequences of adverse determinations of such claims at this time, the Turkish Government might find it appropriate in such cases to postpone making adverse determinations in such cases until after the termination of the war. Furthermore, should the Turkish Government find it possible, pending investigation, to bring about the evacuation from German-controlled areas of claimants to Turkish nationality who may be in danger, the Board will undertake to make funds available from American sources for their maintenance and support and will further undertake promptly to find havens outside Turkey for such evacuees whose claims to Turkish nationality are rejected by the Turkish Government.

In view of the desperate situation in which these claimants to Turkish nationality find themselves, and the deep concern which this Government has for such victims of German oppression, I feel free to express the hope that the Turkish Government will find it possible to extend its protection in the manner suggested, or in some comparable manner, to the persons concerned.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Hon. Mehmet Munir Ertegun
The Ambassador of Turkey
Washington, D. C.

361

DOCUMENT

FMH-94

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (Restricted)

Montevideo
Dated June 3, 1944
Rec'd 8:13 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
509, June 3, 5 p.m.

For Knapp from Sanders

Text of "Resolution concerning the exchange of persons between the American Republics and Germany" is as follows:

"Whereas A. The Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense in its resolution 20 approved May 21, 1943 recommended to the American Republics that as a general policy they not permit the repatriation of unofficial German nationals except in very small numbers and only for the exchange of American nationals under German control or for similar special reasons of particular importance.

B. There are in Germany or German-controlled areas in Europe approximately 2,000 individuals, most of them presently in concentration camps, who while identified with various European minority groups are nevertheless in possession of documents and certificates which have been issued by or in the name of many American Republics as well as other non-European states and which reflect a right of admission to or of protection by such states.

C. It has not previously been possible to nominate such detained individuals for inclusion in the recent exchanges which have been effected of nationals of American Republics for German nationals because of the strict standards governing exchange as established in Resolution 20 and because of the extraordinary difficulties involved in discovering identifying and communicating with such individuals.

D. The Committee is informed that the German Government apparently believing that the American Republics and other non-European States concerned are indifferent to the fate of these individuals, now intends to deprive them of any protection, and to subject them to the severe persecution, including slave labor and extermination, suffered by other members of the racial and political minorities with which these individuals are identified.

E. The prospect of such dire consequences is repugnant to the common ideals of liberty and humanity held by the American Republics and calls for the utmost humanitarian and preventive efforts on the part of the governments of this hemisphere consistent with their own security.

F. Safe refuge for and support of all such individuals, including those whose admission to the country concerned may not be feasible, may be provided for under existing arrangements.

G. There are now available in the American Republics a number of German nationals whose repatriation under present circumstances would not materially conflict with the strict standards of Resolution 20 of the Committee.

The Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense resolves:

One. To direct the attention of the Governments of the American Republics to the desperate plight of those persons now in Germany or German-controlled areas who are identical with European racial or political minority groups and who possess certain documents issued by or which in the name of the American Republics reflect a right of admission to or protection by said republics.

Two. To inform the American Republics that, in the opinion of this Committee, the need to rescue such persons constitutes a sufficient basis for their admission to this hemisphere in exchange for German nationals resident in the American Republics selected with due regard for security requirements set forth in Resolution 20 of this Committee.

Three. To recommend strongly to the various American Republics that they immediately take such uniform action in concert as may be necessary to facilitate the exchange of these individuals for certain German nationals in this hemisphere, and in particular

A. That they inform the German Government through the appropriate channels that the individuals who possess documents of the character mentioned in the first paragraph and issued by or on behalf of an American Republic, are entitled to full protection in accordance with the terms or customary incidence of such documents.

B. That they authorize negotiations with the German Government on their behalf in order to effectuate the exchange of such individuals for German nationals from the Western Hemisphere who desire to be repatriated and who are selected in accordance with such security safeguards as the Republics may mutually deem appropriate in the light of all the circumstances surrounding each particular case.

DOCUMENT

June 17, 1944

CIRCULAR

To American Embassies
in all the other American Republics
Except: San Salvador, Montevideo, Asuncion,
La Paz, Buenos Aires. [*]

In support of the program of the Department and the War Refugee Board which has been the subject of instructions by airgram to the Embassies in various of the American republics, the Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense at Montevideo on May 31, 1944, adopted upon the recommendation of the United States member a resolution favoring, subject to essential reservations regarding security, the exchange of German nationals in this Hemisphere against certain persons belonging to the oppressed peoples of Europe who bear documents issued by or in the name of the American republics or other non-European states reflecting a right of admission to or protection by such republics or states.

The Department feels that it is essential to proceed as quickly as possible with the presentation to the German Government of concrete proposals based upon the Resolution in question and hopes that the government to which you are accredited, which has presumably by this time received official notification of the Resolution from the Committee, will be willing to join in this common program with the other American republics and this Government. The Department will be glad to learn of any initiative taken by the government to which you are accredited to implement this desirable step in strengthening the common front against the Axis.

A suggested translation of the Resolution was sent you on June 3 under cover of a letter signed by Mr. Sanders, the representative of the United States on the Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense. The Department is sending you in the near future a copy of the official translation of this document. There will also be sent you in the near future an instruction outlining certain points of action in respect to the program on which your report is desired.

HULL
JHK

[*] Repeated in substance on same date to Bolivia, El Salvador, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: May 27, 1944
NUMBER: 1846

SECRET

Information contained in your telegram of May 9, 1944 No. 2937 was appreciated by the Department and the promised further report will be awaited with interest.

You are requested to advise the Government of Switzerland that the preliminary steps necessary in order to place before the German Government a concrete proposal or to consider any proposal that Government may desire to make are being undertaken by the Department of State.

Obtaining the adoption by Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense at Montevideo of a resolution which broadens exchange standards in its outstanding Resolution XX which narrowly restricts repatriation of German nationals from this Hemisphere at the present time, is the first step to be taken. We are expediting action to this end.

As contemplated at present time, the proposal of the Department will suggest the progressive exchange of all non-Germans, including Jews and persons of doubtful nationality, interned or otherwise confined in German territory for German nationals resident in the Western Hemisphere at the present. The suggestion will be made that first consideration will logically be given to those bearing passports, visas or other documentation of non-European origin indicating a destination abroad. A proposal such as this will be independent of any being negotiated at the present and will suggest the formulation and exchange of lists for prior approval by both parties. In the main such exchanges probably would depend upon existent neutral passenger vessels plying between the two hemispheres for transportation.

As regards your telegram of May 9, 1944, No. 2928, you may inform the Germans that provision for inclusion of close alien relatives accompanying American citizens will be made in future exchanges of German and United States nationals. Those to be included with American citizens would normally be limited to alien minor children and alien spouses, although other relatives might be considered for general exchange also. Moreover exchange of the alien relatives still held in internment camps in Germany of American citizens repatriated in 1942 will be provided for.

If contemplating the transfer of individuals susceptible of inclusion in contemplated exchanges, the German Government may desire to move them to places whence their delivery for exchange will be facilitated rather than impeded, in view of the foregoing.

Receipt at the earliest possible moment of the Swiss Government's report of the reaction of the German Government to the foregoing possibilities would be appreciated by the Department in order to assist it in its further consideration of the possibility of arranging such exchanges.

HULL

- 1076 -

DOCUMENT

364

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amembassy, Madrid
DATED: May 25, 1944
NUMBER: 1485

Nothing contained in Department's 1384 of May 16, particularly the first sentence thereof, is to be construed as modifying in any way the policy expressed in Department's 992 of April 10. 1384 was intended to apply, as the Department believes you understood, only to the current GRIPSHOLM exchange.

Use of GRIPSHOLM for exchange of other than repatriated nationals of the participating country is precluded by terms of the charter. Therefore, the Department is exploring other means of effecting the exchange against Germans in the other American Republics of all persecuted persons whom the German Government is willing to release. Bearers of passports of the other American Republics or other foreign travel documents will have first consideration.

(Unsigned)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

365

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Madrid
DATED: May 16, 1944, 10:00 p.m.
NUMBER: 1384

SECRET (NIACT)

Contrary to the recommendations of the United States Government and the other American Republics associated with it, there are included, (a) alien relatives of American citizens and (b) persons bearing Latin-American passports whose nationality has not yet been established, in the list of nationals of the United States and the other American Republics approved by the Germans for exchange against a group of 60 Germans from the United States being repatriated on the GRIPSHOLM.

In respect to (a) and persons under (b) for whose embarkation authorization is contained in this telegram, you are informed that upon arrival in Barcelona the Department is waiving non-immigrant visa requirements for all alien passengers not in possession of appropriate visas. After their admission on a temporary basis, those persons coming to the United States as immigrants will be admitted as non-immigrants and will be able to arrange for the procurement of immigration visas. Admittance will be granted only in transit to those aliens in transit to Western Hemisphere destination.

With respect to (b), Pedro and Lydia Chuprine and Jules and Anna Grunstein, bearers of Costa Rican passports, the Costa Rican Government has authorized entrance into that country. Embarkation on the GRIPSHOLM will therefore be accorded to them.

Authorization has not as yet been granted for admission to their respective countries of the following individuals:

Mexico	-	1. Alexander Schweitzer
Colombia	-	1. Ramon Morano 2. Alvarex Morano
Peru	-	1. Clementine Muller 2. Isidore Poiry 3. Zisold de Valdes 4. Mario Baretto
El Salvador	-	1. Bruno Hecht-Sandoval
Nicaragua	-	1. Herman Zwillenberg 2. Zwillenberg - wife 3. Zwillenberg - child 4. Zwillenberg - child

Dominican Republic

- 1. Sinia Maria Castillo
- 2. Jacques Castillo
- 3. Robert Castillo

The surname is given last in the foregoing list.

Authorization is granted by the Department for embarkation on the GRIPSHOLM of such of the foregoing individuals who are bona fide nationals of the American Republics and whose status has been clearly established upon the arrival at Barcelona. You should telegraph most urgently from Barcelona passport or other identifying data regarding them. The Department will inform you urgently if it is subsequently informed by the Republics named that any of the above individuals, who may be unable to qualify for embarkation on basis of examination at Barcelona, are admissible to their territory.

Information has already reached the Department that admittance to the countries whose documentation they bear will be denied to the following individuals:

Nicaragua

- 1. Otto William Strauss
- 2. Regina Strauss nee Maier

Dominican Republic

- 1. Jenny Muller nee Silverstein

Accordingly, authorization for embarkation of the foregoing individuals on the GRIPSHOLM cannot be granted.

Until they can be included in a transfer of refugees to the Fedhala Camp, North Africa, arrange through Blickenstaff to provide at the expense of the War Refugee Board for care of those of the foregoing individuals who are not embarked on the GRIPSHOLM.

The foregoing message was repeated to Barcelona for attention of Smith.

HULL

- 1079 -

DOCUMENT

366

PLAIN

Madrid

Dated July 17, 1944

Rec'd Noon, 18th

Secretary of State
Washington

2500, Seventeenth

Fifteen members of supplementary exchange group left Irún July 15 by train for Lisbon. Other seven members of group proceeded to Madrid on same date and are now in care of Blickenstaff's organization awaiting completion of arrangements for their transfer to Fedhala. Repeated to Lisbon as 179 and London as 596.

BUTTERWORTH

DOCUMENT

367

Department

Plain

Amlegation

September 6, 1944

Bern

3082, sixth

AMERICAN INTERESTS - EUROPE, REPATRIATION

Please inform Swiss Government for guidance of its representatives in Europe in charge of American interests that following classes of individuals are established in order to permit United States Government to designate which classes of individuals eligible for exchange are to have priority in any given operation. Lists for any specified exchange will be made up from one or more of these priority groupings depending upon the administrative, transportation and other circumstances attendant upon each exchange. The priority groupings are as follows:

A. Persons receiving financial assistance through the protecting Powers under authorization of the government to which they owe allegiance, and their spouses and/or children. Under this heading unqualified first priority shall be extended to those persons who are ill, mentally afflicted or aged but able to travel, and unqualified second priority shall be given to those women and children who are unaccompanied by the head of the family. Among the rest, priority shall be accorded to those arrested or interned over those who are at liberty.

B. Persons not receiving financial assistance who have otherwise been extended formal recognition of their nationality through the protecting Power since the outbreak of hostilities. Priorities under this heading shall be the same as under A. Spouses and/or children are to be included.

C. Immediate family members, regardless of the state of their documentation, of citizens of the United States or of the other American republics who were repatriated in earlier exchanges. This heading is intended to cover spouses and/or children. Other categories of relatives or dependents should not (repeat not) be included under this heading unless specifically authorized by the Department.

D. Bona fide nationals of the Western Hemisphere countries, regardless of the state of their documentation, who are confined in institutions for the mentally or incurably afflicted. This covers also the spouses and/or children of such persons.

E. Individuals whose lives are in jeopardy whose claim to nationality is not questioned but whose right to protection may be doubtful because of extended residence abroad, lack of ties in the Western Hemisphere or some other technical reason. Within this category the same priorities shall be applied as under A. Spouses and/or children shall be included.

F. Individuals whose lives are in jeopardy and who bear documentation reflecting a right to exercise citizenship of or, alternatively, a right of protection by or admission into one of the republics of the Western Hemisphere, the circumstances of whose cases preclude adequate examination of the juridical basis of such right by the interested government until peace is restored in Europe or appearance is made before a consular or diplomatic officer of the respective republic, whichever first occurs. Priorities within this group shall be the same as under A. Spouses and/or children are included.

The Department is notifying the other American republics of the foregoing priorities system with the invitation to join with the United States in its adoption and inform their protecting Power accordingly with the request that lists of their nationals desiring repatriation be compiled in accordance with the foregoing categories.

HULL
(AAB)

- 1032 -

368

DOCUMENT

AIRGRAM

A-540
5:35 P.M.

November 9, 1944

Amlegation
Bern

The Department considers it necessary to add another category to the priority grouping of persons eligible for exchange given in Department's telegram no. 3082, September 6, 1944.

The priority groupings listed in telegram under reference are therefore amended by the addition of the following classification:

G. Immediate family members, regardless of the state of their documentation, of alien residents of the United States or of other American Republics. This heading is intended to cover spouses and/or children.

Please inform the Swiss Government accordingly.

ACTING

STETTINIUS

Acting

BL

369

DOCUMENT

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

Amlegation
Bern
4289, Twentieth

Plain
December 20, 1944

The Department considers it advisable to amend category "G" of the priority grouping of persons eligible for exchange given in Department's airgram no. 540 of November 9, 1944 by the insertion of "of American citizens and" between the words "documentation" and "of alien residents".

Please inform Swiss Government accordingly.

STETTINIUS
(EAP)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: December 23, 1944, 3 p.m.
NUMBER: 8293

The following concerns the exchange of civilians and interests of Americans in Germany.

Burden of the Swiss note of December 22 is as follows:

Concerning Switzerland's right to negotiate to include Paraguayans in on-coming exchange, Swiss Legation says that United States' right to represent all western hemisphere countries in making exchange proposals has never been contested by Germany. Neither has the German Foreign Office ever contested Swiss Government's exchange negotiations for non-Swiss represented countries. So far, however, Swiss Legation has proposed exchange only for nationals of Swiss protected countries, which is also true of the 50 to 57 possessors of Latin-American documentation to be exchanged in Category F. Information that the American Government contemplates special German-Paraguayan and German-Colombian exchanges.

The Spanish Embassy gives consent to the Swiss Legation, in the case of Paraguay, to appoint certain possessors of Paraguayan documents at Bergen-Belsen for exchange. Thus it seems that the Spanish representative and the German Foreign Office concur in the Swiss' right to represent Paraguayans in arranging general exchange between Germans and Americans.

German List A, which accompanied November 27 note, recording 642 internees of Bergen-Belsen, is likewise transmitted. (Comment of Legation: 641 is the actual count — including 45 Americans, 3 Venezuelans, 33 Argentinians, 8 Brazilians, 111 Ecuadorans, 1 Guatemalan, 20 Haitians, 96 Hondurans, 267 Paraguayans, 33 Salvadorans, 12 Peruvians, and 12 Uruguayans). None are listed who were deported from Vittel in April and May 1944. German Foreign Office says they will later transmit List (B) which gives the names of persons with relatives in the United States.

As the Swiss Legation at Berlin has received only one copy of List A, it retained same until now to make a careful study and compare it with its files on Latin American Jews so that the Swiss find this list of 125 has previously been reported, which rises to 132 (including 44 Paraguayans) after the addition of a few relatives. In selecting individuals to be included in F Category, this list will act as a basis. Regarding this selection, the Swiss Legation makes these observations:

Since it is the expressed desire of the German Foreign Office in the note referred to above that the Germans interned in South and Central America (among whom would be the Paraguays and Colombians) be added to the group of internees now in the United States and exchanged with the latter, difficulties from the German side seem to be occasioned by the organization of a special German-Paraguayan exchange. It is to be noted, in respect to the special exchange between Germany and Colombia that at Bergen-Belsen there are no possessors of Colombian documentation, which information comes in German note of November 27.

The names of those for whom special representations have been made would first be proposed to the Germans by the Swiss Legation; and last, to be compared with the Netherland Jewish Committee list will be the German List A. The Swiss Legation has actually detected that there are, on German List A, 162 of those named in the Dutch list as possessors of Latin-American documentation.

Neither the files nor any other source bear information allowing the Swiss Legation to render judgment on the cases of the balance of those which the German List A sets at 400.

Further, there are a certain number of Category F cases at Liebenau and Tittmoning which, according to the Swiss Legation, are not comprised in its list of 132, though one cannot be assured of the fate of these Jews under present circumstances.

The Swiss Legation requests early advice should the Department wish to include persons from Tittmoning and Liebenau in group of 75 Category F repatriables.

More specific information will soon be transmitted by the Swiss Legation concerning the composition of group of 75 for whom there is now provided exchange in categories.

A competent German Foreign Office official has again urged the point that German authorities wish an increase in the number of Category F repatriables. This comes via the Swiss Foreign Office from the Berlin Legation's late communication which adds that the future repatriation of Bergen-Belsen internees bearing Latin-American documentation looms more urgent when one considers the disquieting nature of their future fate. Only if the American Government's interest for this category of Jews is expressed in specific exchange proposals and promptly executed, can they be protected from the measures directed against Jews not bearing Latin-American documentation. Summary end.

In Legation's airmail despatch 10349 of December 23, there is being forwarded above mentioned German List A and Swiss Legation list of 132.

DOCUMENT

JP
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET)

January 3, 1945

8 p.m.

AMEMBASSY
PARIS

33

The following for Hodgdon is from Department and War Refugee Board.

Reference Department's 438 of November 15, 1944 and 15 of January 2, 1945.

The Department and War Refugee Board would appreciate your arranging for the care and custody of the 50 to 75 ad hoc Latin American passport holders upon their arrival in Marseilles on or about January 18 and until such time as arrangements for their onward movement can be completed. Philippeville rather than Fedhala will probably be the temporary destination for some of this group.

It is suggested that you immediately contact Dr. Joseph Schwartz and Arthur Greenleigh of the Joint Distribution Committee who are now in Paris and who are prepared to lend financial and technical assistance in connection with the immediate maintenance and onward transportation of these passport holders. Since it would seem to be desirable to have Schwartz and/or Greenleigh in Marseilles for this purpose, you should give them all possible assistance in arranging travel to Marseilles.

As soon as possible after the arrival of these people in Marseilles, Department and War Refugee Board should be furnished with a complete list of this group of ad hoc passport holders, giving their names, ages, true nationality, number of family units, etc. In addition, Department and Board would appreciate report from you as to the number holding Palestine certificates and as to the attitude of the individuals themselves with respect to ultimate destination.

STETTINIUS
(M&V)

- 1087 -
DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

372



January 12, 1945

OF THE
DIRECTOR

Dear Governor Lehman:

Reference is made to my letter to you of November 16, 1944, describing a possible movement of 8,000 refugees through Switzerland. Reference is also made to MAT 435 of December 4, 1944, indicating that AFHQ and UNRRA have agreed to hold the Philippeville Camp in Algeria in reserve for emergencies that may arise as a result of the arrival of this group of refugees in Switzerland.

The War Refugee Board has been advised by the State Department that there is included in a group of approximately 841 persons who are to be exchanged in Switzerland for German nationals approximately 50 to 75 refugees from the Bergen Belsen concentration camp who are holding ad hoc Latin American passports which do not authorize the holders to enter countries in the Western Hemisphere. Accordingly, arrangements will have to be made for their reception elsewhere upon their arrival in Marseilles on or about January 27th.

It would be appreciated if arrangements could be made to receive this group of refugees at Philippeville. The War Department has been advised in order that arrangements may be made by SHAEF for the transportation of these refugees to Philippeville.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Herbert H. Lehman,
Director General,
United Nations Relief & Rehabilitation
Administration,
Washington, D. C.

C
O
P
Y

- 1088 -

DOCUMENT

UNITED NATIONS
RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION

1344 Connecticut Avenue
Washington 25, D.C.

30 January 1945

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Reference is made to your letter of January 12th regarding some fifty to seventy-five refugees from the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp who are holding ad hoc Latin American passports, and who are expected in Marseilles on or about January 27th.

We have informed the Chief of UNRRA's Italian Mission of their arrival, and he will consult with the Military authorities regarding their final disposition.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
HERBERT H. LEHMAN

Herbert H. Lehman
Director General

DOCUMENT

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, London
DATED: June 3, 1944
NUMBER: 4411

SECRET

To Ambassador Winant, London, England.

Repeated inquires are made of War Refugee Board concerning eligibility for exchange of Jews in German-controlled territory holding Palestine certificates. Please inquire from proper Foreign Office officials whether such persons declared eligible by Britain and Germany, whether any such exchanges have actually taken place, and if response is affirmative, the procedure followed in placing such persons on exchange lists.

HULL

DOCUMENT

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 20, 1944
NUMBER: 4889

SECRET

We have now received from the Refugee Department of the Foreign Office a letter answering the inquiries of the War Refugee Board concerning the eligibility for exchange of Jews now in German-controlled territory who hold Palestine certificates, as forwarded in Department's cable of June 3, No. 4411.

It is stated by the Foreign Office that the Palestine Government in collaboration with the Jewish Agency for Palestine nominates persons whom it would be willing to exchange for German citizens held in Palestine and then the names of such persons are communicated to the German Government through the protecting power (Switzerland). However, in practice the German Government often declares itself unable to trace the persons named and other members of the Jewish race have been substituted by it. Two exchanges have taken place up to the present, one in December 1941 and another in November 1942 involving about 350 German citizens and 180 holders of Palestine certificates and their next of kin. Thus the balance is to the advantage of the Germans and to redress it we are now negotiating a third exchange on a basis of 280 certificate holders and 110 Germans.

With respect to the procedure to be followed in placing persons on exchange lists, it is suggested by the Foreign Office that the War Refugee Board might be told that Jewish organizations or individual inquirers should be told to communicate names of persons in whom they are interested to the Colonial Office in London, which would then forward them to the High Commissioner at Jerusalem and the Jewish Agency for decision as to the suitability of their being placed upon the list for exchange in the manner which we above outlined.

WINANT

DOCUMENT

376

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: July 8, 1944
NUMBER: 5396

CONFIDENTIAL

For the attention of the War Refugee Board.

We have just received from the Foreign Office a communication with further respect to the procedure to be followed in placing on exchange lists Jews now in German-controlled territory who hold Palestine certificates, as outlined in the last paragraph of Embassy's cable dated June 20, No. 4889.

It is stated by the Foreign Office that the Colonial Office has informed it that Jews holding Palestine certificates should not apply through the Colonial Office but that all applications from the general public for inclusion of people in the Palestine-German exchange should be addressed direct to the Commissioner of Migration and Statistics, Jerusalem. It is stated that if they are accepted for exchange, the High Commissioner will then forward the names to the Colonial Office, and so to the protecting power through the Foreign Office.

WINANT

DOCUMENT

377

Ankara
Dated April 7, 1945
Rec'd 11:42 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington,

PRIORITY

473, April 7, 6 p.m.

Prior to the receipt today of Department's reference cable I had discussed with Foreign Office, the British Embassy and the Swedish Legation the question of the 134 Jewish persons on board the DROTTNINGHOLM which is expected in Istanbul on Monday. (REDRPT-TEL 393, April 5 and London's 19, March 28).

Just prior to his departure on April 5 for the San Francisco Conference as a member of the Turk delegation, Acting Secretary General Erkin informed me these individuals were embarked on the DROTTNINGHOLM without prior notification to or the consent of the Turk Government; that few if any of them have any claim to Turkish nationality; that the Turk Government would probably not (repeat not) permit them to disembark from the DROTTNINGHOLM even for a temporary stay in Istanbul; and it might send them all back to Sweden from Turkey on the return voyage of the DROTTNINGHOLM. I informed Erkin that I thought any such action on the part of the Turk Government might have an unfortunate effect particularly at this time, upon Turk-American relations in view of the publicity in the United States press that would be sure to attend any such action its part.

In conversation yesterday with the Foreign Office official who has this matter immediately in charge (REMBS 450, April 3) I reiterated to him the point of view expressed to Erkin which he said he shared. He stated the Turk Government had not yet decided what position it would take with respect to permitting these persons to land at Istanbul.

I expressed the above mentioned point of view last evening to the British Ambassador before he saw the Acting Foreign Minister with whom he discussed this matter. The Foreign Office official last referred to above informs me this afternoon the British Ambassador was informed by Sumer that the Turk Government is prepared to permit the persons in question to enter Turkey in transit if the British Government will undertake to permit them to enter Palestine. The British Ambassador informs me this afternoon that he informed Sumer during their conversation last night that he would telegraph to London (he has since done so) requesting instructions as to

whether the British Government is willing to let these individuals enter Palestine under the quota scheme. Peterson states some of the persons are German Jews, some of other nationalities. He states further he cabled to London some days ago on this subject and the reply he received did not encourage him to believe these persons will be admitted to Palestine. I gather he feels a reply from London may not be forthcoming immediately.

In view of foregoing Department may desire to discuss this phase of the matter with the British Government. I had discussed this subject with a Secretary of the British Embassy at the time London's 19 was received and learned the cable referred to above by the British Ambassador had been sent to London. The Secretary promised I would be informed when a reply was received. Yesterday the Swedish Minister informed me that if the Turkish authorities declined to permit these persons to disembark in Turkey all (repeat all) Turkish nationals on board the Drottningholm might be prevented from disembarking and taken back to Sweden along with the 134 Jewish persons concerned.

Repeated to London as 29.

PACKER

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, London
DATED: April 9, 1945
NUMBER: 2757

SECRET

U. S. URGENT

See your March 28 cable No. 3186. War Refugee Board and Department assume that you have discussed with the Foreign Office Ankara's April 17 cable No. 29. Along these lines, you should stress the desirability from a security standpoint of removing German nationals and officials from Turkey as soon as possible, a view which the Foreign Office presumably shares. Also, it is believed by the Department to be very undesirable that any Jews released from Germany for purpose of exchange be returned ultimately to Germany as such a development, apart from almost certain hardships to persons concerned, would probably imperil seriously pending negotiations, looking toward the departure of Jews from Germany in exchanges, between this Government and the German Government.

STETTINIUS

- 1095 -

DOCUMENT

379

MF-1971

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (RESTRICTED)

Ankara

Dated April 15, 1945
Rec'd 4:45 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

US URGENT

519, April 15, 10 a.m.

I informed the appropriate Foreign Office official yesterday that rooms had been reserved for the 80 refugees ex-SS DROTTNINGHOLM now on board another vessel at Istanbul (REEMBS 503 April 12) (*) more hotels in that city and inquired whether it would not be possible to allow them to come ashore particularly in view of the fact that no sleeping accommodations were available on board the small vessel in question and of the fact that eating facilities on board were unsatisfactory. He informed me later that instructions had been issued to allow the refugees to come ashore.

PACKER

(*) Apparent omission

DOCUMENT

380

MMG
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement.
(Secret-W)

War Refugee Board

To Be Sent in Secret "W"

July 28, 1944

Amembassy
Ankara
665

The cable below from Department and Board is War Refugee Board 83.

1. There follows the substance of a message received from Amlegation Bern:

QUOTE A note from the Foreign Office, dated yesterday, states that accoraing to a telegram from the Swiss Legation at Budapest, authorization has been given by the Government of Hungary for the departure of all Jews from Hungary who hold entry permits for another country; including Palestine.

This same message states that transit through occupied territories will be permitted by the German Government. As soon as possible the Swiss Legation, in collaboration with the Palestinian Bureau, Budapest, will take necessary measures for evacuation. It is probably that Hungarian police passports will constitute travel documents. UNQUOTE

In view of the foregoing it is of the utmost importance that no effort be spared to induce the Turkish Government promptly either to issue transit visas to every person in Hungary holding a Palestine certificate or to inform the Hungarian Government that all such persons may enter Turkey enroute to Palestine without the formal issuance of visas, and to advise the Hungarian Government of its willingness to do so. Furthermore, every effort should be made with Jewish Agency representatives to secure the speedy issuance of as many additional Palestine certificates as possible to persons in Hungary. Time is obviously of the essence and the Board should be informed promptly of any difficulties that may be encountered.

2. Since the above quoted message may have broad implications, please endeavor urgently to ascertain whether the Turkish Government will promptly advise the Governments of Germany, Rumania, and Bulgaria and such authorities as there may be in Slovakia (as well as Hungary) that Turkey is prepared to issue transit visas to all persons holding Palestine certificates or to admit such persons enroute to Palestine

without the formal issuance of transit visas. If Turkey has already taken this position, it would nevertheless seem appropriate at this time formally to restate it to all Axis governments. Please keep the Department and Board advised.

3. There follows the substance of the pertinent portion of a message to Amembassy London:

QUOTE In further response to message from Bern, the substance of which is quoted above, this Government is prepared to advise the Hungarian and neutral governments that all Jews arriving in neutral countries from Hungary will be afforded havens in United Nations territory just as promptly as military considerations permit, neutral governments to be given adequate assurances as to the maintenance of such persons in the meantime and to be requested to advise the Hungarian Government of their willingness to receive such persons. Please endeavor to ascertain from the Foreign Office whether the Government of the United Kingdom will join this Government in this attempt to save lives. American missions in neutral countries are being instructed to take appropriate action along these lines in collaboration with their British colleagues if possible, alone if necessary. Since time is of the essence, British missions should be advised of Foreign Office views promptly. UNQUOTE

Accordingly, you are requested to consult with your British colleagues and either in collaboration with them or alone, as the circumstances may develop, approach appropriate officials of the Turkish Government with the request that Turkey advise the Hungarian Government that it is prepared to receive Jews released by Hungary and permitted to go to Turkey. You may assure appropriate Turkish officials that if Turkey so advises the Hungarian Government, Jews arriving in Turkey from Hungary will be evacuated to United Nations territory as promptly as possible and that in the meantime the United States will undertake to make arrangements for their maintenance and support in Turkey. You should inform the Department and the Board promptly of the results of your consultation with your British colleagues and your approach to the Turkish Government.

4. There are a number of persons in enemy controlled areas to whom American visas were issued on and after July 1, 1941, the date when present existing procedures and security checks became effective, who, by reason of transportation difficulties and the advent of war, were unable to make effective use of such visas. It is believed that a large proportion of such persons are among those groups subject to enemy persecution. In the belief that the availability of new American visas for such persons may save their lives, the Swiss Government is being requested to advise enemy governments that American consular

officers in neutral countries have been authorized to issue an immigration visa to any person to whom an American immigration visa was issued or for whom a visa was authorized on or after July 1, 1941, and who has been in areas controlled by Germany or any of Germany's allies since December 8, 1941, provided that such person presents himself to an American consular officer in a neutral country and is found not to have become disqualified for the issuance of a visa.

Accordingly, American consular officers in Turkey are hereby authorized to issue new American immigration visas to any such person to whom an American visa was issued or for whom such visa was authorized after July 1, 1941, provided that (a) such person other than a child under 16 years of age is found upon telegraphic reference to the Department for security check not to be the subject of an adverse report dated subsequent to the previous approval, (b) such person is not affirmatively found by the consul to be inadmissible into the United States under the law, or (c) the consul does not consider that the case is one which should be recommended for consideration under the committee procedure.

Please advise appropriate Turkish officials of the foregoing authorization and attempt to secure their prompt agreement to advise enemy governments of Turkey's willingness to permit the entry into Turkey, with or without transit visas, of all persons to whom American immigration visas were issued on or subsequent to July 1, 1941. You may assure such officials that any such persons so admitted will be adequately maintained and that any who may be found not (repeat not) to be qualified for the issuance of a visa will be evacuated as promptly as possible. Detailed instructions in connection with the issuance of new American immigration visas pursuant to the foregoing authority will follow promptly.

5. The foregoing measures represent an attempt on the part of this Government to take advantage of the information contained in the message from Amlegation Bern, the substance of which is quoted above, on various bases. The Board would appreciate any views that Hirschmann may have with respect to any further action that might be taken. In this connection, Hirschmann might consider, in the light of Department's 627 of July 11, WRB's 78, and such information as he may have through channels available to him, the advisability of requesting the Rumanian Government freely to admit Jews from Hungary into South Eastern Rumania pending their evacuation therefrom. Any views that Hirschmann may have should be transmitted to the Board promptly.

6. The instruction set out in paragraph marked three above is issued notwithstanding your 1287 of July 15.

STETTINIUS
Acting
(GLW)

- 1099 -

DOCUMENT

381

ECC-195
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement,
(Secret W)

Stockholm
DATED: August 12, 1944
REC'D: 8:28 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
3074, August 12, 9 p.m.

WRB No. 71.

Following is substance of note dated August 11, received from
Foreign Office (re Department's 1501, July 28, 10 p.m. WRB 58).

Swedish Legation Budapest authorized issue Swedish visas Jews
holding American immigration visas issued on or after July one, 1941.
Swedish Legations Budapest, Berlin instructed inform respective govern-
ments that effect.

JOHNSON

DOCUMENT

382

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: August 5, 1944
NUMBER: 1430

CONFIDENTIAL

With reference to Department's cable 665, dated July 28, 1944, following a consultation with my British colleague and after being advised that no instructions from London had been received by him on the subject, this morning I discussed the matter of issuance of Turkish transit visas to people in Hungary who hold Palestinian certificates or American immigration visas which were issued on or subsequent to the first of July, 1941, with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the conversation I requested having instructions sent at once to Turkish Consular officers in Hungary to issue Turkish transit visas to such people without prior consultation with Ankara. In addition, I requested him to have like instructions dispatched to the Turkish Consular officers in Slovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania. The reply of the Secretary General was that he was sure his Government would be willing to take the measures requested immediately. It was his hope that the transportation of refugees from Hungary could be arranged for in such a manner that they would go to Istanbul by vessel, from Burgas or Varna preferably.

With respect to our assurance that the U. S. would be willing to arrange for the support and maintenance of refugees while in Turkey, he declared that it should be of the most aid to the Turkish Government at this time when a highly increased burden has been placed on the railroads of Turkey as a result of the halting of Turkish coastwise shipping services, if the U. S. could make arrangements to make available a few passenger cars to the Turkish railroads from one of the Near Eastern nations, in order to accelerate the transportation of refugees. It is my strong recommendation that WBB and the Department put forth every endeavor to comply with this very reasonable request of the Government of Turkey.

Referring to paragraph No. five, as reported in Embassy's cable 1365, dated July 25, 1944, Hirschmann has urged Cretzianu to persuade his Government to issue, without limit, Rumanian transit visas to Jewish refugees who are departing for Palestine from Hungary via Rumania. Cretzianu advised Hirschmann, in another conversation on this matter today that the Government of Rumania has concurred in principle to issue Rumanian transit visas to Jewish refugees departing from Hungary, provided authorization to grant transit visas to such people has been given by the Turkish Government to their representative.

Refer Embassy's cable 1391, dated July 30, 1944. Hirschmann has collaborated with the Jewish agency in obtaining prompt issuance of Palestine certificates, through the channel of the Swiss Legation in Hungary and the Swiss Minister in Ankara, to 8,200 Jewish Refugees in Hungary. This is with reference to paragraph 3 of the paragraph numbered one.

KELLEY

DOCUMENT

383

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 24, 1944
NUMBER: 2918

CONFIDENTIAL

Cable to Minister Harrison and McClelland from the Department of State and the War Refugee Board.

(1) Reference your 4983 of August 3, Section 2. It is not the policy of this Government to deal in specific numbers. You may in your discretion, however, authorize the Swiss Foreign Office to reply to inquiry of German Legation, Budapest, by referring to the position of this Government as indicated by items 2 and 3 of Department's 2605 of July 28, WRB's 94, Department's 2977 of August 21, WRB's 122, and Department's 2657 of August 2 and item 3 below.

(2) Notwithstanding recent developments as indicated in your 5197 of August 11, this Government intends to pursue further the reported offers of Hungarian authorities as typified by your 4604 of July 19.

(3) Accordingly, please request appropriate officials of the Swiss Government to advise enemy governments, particularly Germany and Hungary, that American consular officers in neutral countries have been authorized to issue an immigration visa to the alien husband, wife, parent, and unmarried minor child of an American citizen, and the wife and unmarried minor child of an alien resident of the United States who has been in an area controlled by Germany or any of Germany's allies, provided that such person presents himself to an American consular officer and is found not to be disqualified for a visa. At the same time, please attempt to secure the prompt agreement of the Swiss Government to advise enemy governments of Switzerland's willingness to permit the entry into Switzerland of persons falling within the categories described above. You may assure Swiss officials that any such persons so admitted will be adequately maintained and that any who may be found not to be qualified for the issuance of a visa will be evacuated as promptly as possible. Similar requests are being made of Sweden, Spain, Turkey, and Portugal.

(4) Consular officers in Switzerland are hereby authorized to issue immigration visas to any alien who is the husband, wife, parent, or unmarried minor child of an American citizen and on whose behalf nonquota or first preference status has been established by the approval of the Department of Justice of a petition filed by such citizen relative, or who is the wife or unmarried

minor child of an alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence and as such is entitled to second preference immigration status. The issuance of visas is subject to the proviso, however, that (a) such person other than a child under 16 years of age is found upon telegraphic reference to the Department for security check not to be the subject of an adverse report or to be open to reasonable suspicion because of the circumstances of the case such as those attending the release of a male applicant of military age, (b) such person is not affirmatively found by the consul to be inadmissible into the United States under the law, or (c) the consul does not consider that the case is one which should be recommended for consideration under the committee procedure.

Appropriate private agencies are being advised of the foregoing so that the filing of petitions by citizen and resident alien relatives of victims of persecution may be expedited, the names of persons whose status within the categories mentioned above is established will be cabled to you from time to time. If any persons within such categories should arrive in Switzerland after Swiss have advised enemy governments in accordance with item 3 above, but prior to any notification to you of the establishment of their status, please advise Board promptly of their names and of the names and addresses of relatives claimed in the United States.

(5) Please keep Department and Board advised of any developments in this program. Reference your 5042 of August 5 and your 5248 of August 12.

Please express to M. Pilet Golaz the appreciation of Department and Board.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 133.

HULL

DOCUMENT

384

ALH-1085

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern

Dated December 16, 1944
Rec'd 4:52 p.m., 17th

Secretary of State
Washington

8177, December 16, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

Department's 3844, November 11 (WRB 269)

All lists mentioned have been received and transmitted to Swiss with exception number 222 which not yet received. However, list bearing number 220 received but not mentioned by WRB.

Swiss note dated December 7 referring to contents second paragraph Department's 2605 July 28 and third group of lists mentioned Department's telegram under reference states that Swiss Legation Berlin has requested that following be brought to Legation's attention before Swiss representative notifies list to German Government:

Judging from experience Swiss Legation considers that representations which it would make to German authorities in this connection would contribute nothing to assure effective protection to persons covered by Department's 2605 so long as they cannot participate in American-German exchanges. It would appear preferable to refrain for the present from notifying to German Foreign Office these lists of non-exchangeable persons to whom the American Government is prepared to extend its hospitality because communication these lists could only create confusion prejudicial to smooth conduct of negotiations for forthcoming American-German exchange. Inquiry is made whether, notwithstanding foregoing, communication of lists to German Government is desired.

In another note also dated December 7 Swiss refer to contents first sentence numbered part three of Department's 2918, August 24 and to first and second groups of lists mentioned Department's 3844, November 11 and transmit following observations of Swiss Legation Berlin:

American Legation by note dated November 21 (which transmitted contents Department's airgram A-540 on November 9) gave notification that Department had established a seventh category of persons entitled to participate in American-German exchanges that is, category G which includes wives and children of alien residents of United States or of other American Republics.

/End of Section One/

HUDDLE

JMM-1099

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern

Dated December 16, 1944
Rec'd 7:05 p.m., 17th

Secretary of State
Washington

8177, December 16, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

(?) (?) (?) persons resident in United States in a single category such as category and accordingly eliminate distinction established by Department's 2918.

Owing foregoing Foreign Office inquiries whether persons referred to in said telegram could be assimilated to category G. If this not possible it desires know whether Swiss Legation Berlin may be authorized defer transmission lists to Germans until negotiations for forthcoming exchange are completed.

Question of authorizing Swiss entry visas individually or collectively is still under consideration by federal police. In preliminary discussion chief of police expressed grave doubt as to protective value of authorizing Swiss visas to large number of persons whose present whereabouts is completely unknown and whose last addresses are several years old. His experience with German police led him to believe that they would take very little action on basis of lists in question and in view of Jewish race of persons concerned disclaim any knowledge as to their whereabouts.

In view of Swiss Legation's observations it appears to Legation that classification of persons as exchangeable would afford a better possibility of according protection that authorization of Swiss entry visas.

Legation wishes also confirm receipt WRB lists Nos. 265, 269, and 274 which already forwarded to Swiss. Lists Nos. 276, 277, 27(?), 302, 303, 305, 306 and two lists both bearing No. 307 have been received and their transmission to Foreign Office will be withheld pending Department's observations to comments given above.

/End Message/

HUDDLE

Large portion at beginning undecipherable and serviced.

DOCUMENT

385

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN
DATED: December 30, 1944
NUMBER: 4398

SECRET

Board and Department agree with suggestions made in your 8177 of the sixteenth of December. In accordance with this, you are asked to advise the Swiss officials that individuals whose names were or will be forwarded to you pursuant to Department's 2605 of the twenty-eighth of July and 2918 of the twenty-fourth of August are eligible for exchange against German civilians under Department's 3082 of the sixth of September and A-540 of the ninth of November as amended by Department's message number 4289 of the twentieth of December. Although all of these individuals might be considered as bearing "documentation reflecting a right of admission into one of the Republics of the Western Hemisphere" for the sake of uniformity, they should be included under category G of Department's A-540 as amended by Department's 4289 of the twentieth of December. In the event the Legation or the Swiss because of special circumstances prevailing in a given case find that any persons so named are entitled to classification in a higher category, with reference to the Department such reclassification is authorized.

We hope that under this procedure nothing will stand in the way of the speedy transmission of the names given in the lists in question to the German officials.

This is WRB Bern cable number 346. The foregoing is for McClelland.

STETTINIUS

- 1107 -

DOCUMENT

386

AVH-731

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Stockholm

Dated December 9, 1944
Rec'd 11:26 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

5043, December 9, 11 a.m.

(SECTION ONE OF TWO)

Receipt confirmed of WRB lists of persons in enemy occupied Europe who are close relatives of United States citizens on whose behalf petitions for issuance of immigration visas have been approved (Department's 2273, November 11, 8 p.m.): 99, 100, 102, 112, 113, 116, 222, 240, 248, 249.

Relatives of resident aliens whose verification of last entry approved: 104, 108, 111, 221, 224, 237, 245, 246, 250.

Persons to whom United States visas authorized on or after July 1, 1941: 82, 87, 98, 103, 107, 232, 234.

All of above lists have been transmitted to the Foreign Office with exception of 248, 249 and 250 which were received December 5 and are being typed preparatory to submission.

This our 111 for WRB and Iver Olsen.

In conversation today with Legation member, Foreign Office official stated no action taken to forward these lists to Swedish Legations in countries concerned. Swedish authorities doubt such action would benefit intended beneficiaries. Transmittal of lists to Budapest Legation difficult because no departing courier for 2 months and telegraphing list felt impractical.

Following reason advanced to explain their retention of lists: special measures taken during last months were by Swedish Legation in Budapest is doing everything

/End of Section One/

JOHNSON

ASB-742

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Stockholm
Dated December 9, 1944
Rec'd 12:03 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

5043, December 9, 11 a.m. (SECTION TWO)

possible to save and succor a large number of Jews under a special arrangement recognized by Hungarian Government. According to last reports Sweden has about 15,000 Jewish proteges under this program; 5,000 of these have protective passports. Swedish authorities are loath to do anything that in any way could jeopardize or retard this venture. They are of opinion that presentation of WRB lists to Hungarian Government would have unfavorable result and might conceivably damage their other Jewish relief work. Swedish officials further feel that no practical value is to be derived by presenting lists inasmuch Swedish Legation in Budapest stands ready to aid all Jews who apply.

Again as respect WRB lists of persons in France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, et cetera, Swedish authorities after consultation with Swedish Minister in Berlin are reluctant to submit lists to German Government as it is feared presentation of names would adversely affect outcome of the rather large number of special relief cases already being handled. It was suggested by Foreign Office that perhaps Swiss Government could hand lists to German Government with recommendation that advantage be taken of this opportunity to send Jews to United States. It was recalled by Foreign Office official that Sweden in August of this year informed German Government that Sweden is willing to allow entry into Sweden of any person to whom an American immigration visa was issued on or after July 1, 1944. He further stated Sweden simultaneously with presentation of lists by Swiss could repeat this assurance.

Legation is not optimistic concerning possibility of many benefits arising out of present procedure and feels Swedish standpoint and suggestion have merit.

/End Message/

JOHNSON

DOCUMENT

387

EK

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

December 16, 1944
Midnight

AMLEGATION
STOCKHOLM

2537

The following cable is WRB 270.

Reference your 5043 of December 9.

We appreciate weight of Swedish arguments reported there-in and would be inclined to accept them. But before doing so, we suggest that you draw the attention of Foreign Office to the fact that, after having informed German Government in August that Sweden is willing to allow entry of persons with American immigration visas, there would appear to be a basis for Sweden to follow this up by informing the Germans of the names of the people concerned. Viewed in this light, our suggestion does not (repeat not) involve any new step.

The problem mainly involves Jews and other Nazi victims in Germany and German-occupied territories other than Hungary. In view of developments in Hungary, we agree that transmission of names of Jews still there would be of no (repeat no) likely benefit, but since many such Jews have been deported to other Axis areas, the transmission of their names may still be bene-ficial.

Board is inclined to share your doubts as to the effectiveness of the suggested procedure, but feels that no (repeat no) possibility of saving lives should be overlooked.

STETTINIUS
(GHW)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: March 7, 1944
NUMBER: 770

CONFIDENTIAL

The fact that you have had approaches through various channels from one or more of the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary and that you have channels through which messages can be conveyed to one or more of these Governments is borne in mind by the Department.

We instruct you to convey through such channels to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary, or any of them to which you have such access, the following information:

At the present time the Government of the United States is aware that these Governments are pursuing programs of persecuting their Jewish minorities and refugees of other nationalities who have escaped into their territories. The persecution consists among other forms in sending such refugees beyond the borders of their own countries into Poland where they undergo various forms of cruelty and even death, dictated by Nazi degeneracy. Still another form of persecution consists in preventing the refugees from escaping to neutral countries where their lives may be saved.

The Government of the United States is determined to do everything it can to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of losing their lives and to find them havens of refuge. Any continuation by these Governments of the execution of these policies of Hitlerite persecutions is viewed with great seriousness by this Government and will be kept in mind. The President, in establishing the War Refugee Board, recently restated unequivocably the position of the United States Government in this matter. (Department's cable to Bern of January 25, 1944 No. 201). The Government of the United States takes the view that these Governments, as well as their subordinates and functionaries, are fully responsible for the actions of persecution committed on their territories and in the interests of humanity they should desist immediately. Moreover, they should be informed that in their own interest, they will be well advised to take advantage in the future of such opportunities as may be available to them to allow refugees to depart across their borders into territories of any neutral countries which may be prepared to receive them.

You are requested to try to ascertain through appropriate channels that the Governments in question have received the substance of this message, and the results of the representations, if any.

- 1111 -

The foregoing message was repeated to Cairo for MacVeagh as Greek Series 37 and to Stockholm, Lisbon, and Ankara as the Department's Cables No. 372, 713, and 177 respectively.

STETTINIUS

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Lisbon
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 11, 1944
NUMBER: 779

SECRET

Through appropriate channels the substance of the message contained in the Department's number 713 dated March 7 has been launched and within a comparatively short time may be expected to reach both the Bulgarian and Hungarian Governments. Although it may still take a few more days to expedite it from here steps are also being taken to see that it is conveyed to the Government of Rumania.

Although we have reason to believe already that we may expect an answer in due course from the Government of Hungary, no such intimation has been conveyed as yet concerning the intentions of the Government of Bulgaria or of course of the Government of Rumania, with the channel of approach to which we have not yet made contact.

These answers will be sent to you as quickly as possible when and if we receive them.

NORWEB

DOCUMENT

390

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

TO: American Legation, Lisbon
FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 12, 1944
NO: 1013

SECRET

War Refugee Board sends the following for the attention of Minister Norweb.

Your telegram of March 11, 1944 No. 779 is referred to herewith.

The Swedish press carries reports that there has been an intensification of pressure by the Nazis on Hungary to strengthen the anti-Jewish policy and to deport Polish and other Jews who have escaped to Hungary.

In view of the German military's reported operations in Hungary, we request that you again approach the channels to the Government of Hungary that are available to you and state again the position taken by this Government and make it clearly understood that in spite of the current pressure by the Nazis any action on the part of the Hungarian Government to inflict new and further persecutions or to continue existing persecutions designed against foreign or native Jews or the deportation to Germany itself or any territory controlled by Germany of foreign or native Jews will be considered by this Government with the greatest disfavor and will be taken into account at the end of the war. You should also again approach the Rumanian Government through the channels that are available to you and inform them regarding the foregoing message to the Hungarian Government, explaining the circumstances that the approach is based upon. You should clearly intimate that in spite of any actions taken by the Nazis to intensify the deportation or other persecution of foreign or native Jews, which may result in military defeats of the Nazis or from either causes, the foregoing view will also be taken by this Government with respect to the Government of Rumania.

(Unsigned)

Amlegation
Bern
3461, Seventh

Plain
October 7, 1944

The Department has received information indicating that orders have been given to exterminate the Jews in three concentration camps, namely, Osswiescin, Birkenau and Naeuss. Probably some 65,000 Jews are involved.

You are requested, through any channels available to you, to convey to the German Representative at Bern that the United States has this information and further understands that the death order has been personally authorized by Himmler, to be carried out by certain other officials. Direct responsibility for this proposed crime is thus fixed, and if it is carried out appropriate consequences will follow in accordance with the declared policy of the United States Government, and will attach to all participants.

Kindly report any developments in the situation as soon as they become known to you.

HULL
(SWB)

DOCUMENT

392

DMH-709
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET N)

Stockholm
Dated October 16, 1944
Rec'd 4:20 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

4206, October 16, 7 p.m.

Substance of Department's 2041, October 12, midnight (WRB's 105) has been communicated to Eric von Post, head of Political Department Swedish Foreign Office. (This is our 93 for WRB) and he has undertaken to make every effort to have the message conveyed to the German authorities.

JOHNSON

DOCUMENT

393

CSS -341
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET-W)

Lisbon
Dated October 14, 1944
Rec'd 1:21 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

3149, October 14, 1 p.m.

This WRB 221

Taking steps through available channels convey substance your
telegram 2701, October 10, to German authorities Lisbon. Will re-
port result later.

NORWEB

DOCUMENT

394

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Dublin
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: January 17, 1945
NUMBER: 9

SECRET

In connection with the following message please refer to Department's message of January 13, No. 12.

I am informed by External Affairs that in response to the inquiry made by Briscoe regarding the rumor that the Germans intended to liquidate the inmates of the two camps in question, they addressed inquiry to the Government of Germany and then replied as follows to Briscoe.

Reply from the German authorities to our inquiries about the two camps, Oswiecim, and Hoss and Birkenau, has now been received by us. The Germans state that the rumor that it is their intention to exterminate the Jews in these camps is devoid of all foundation, is pure invention, and that the inmates of these camps would be evacuated if the camps were to be abandoned.

I am informed by Briscoe that he made no public statement and that he made no statement on his own authority, but that he merely forwarded the above to London to the Jewish agencies there. For this reason it seems that the statement in question is merely the reply of the Government of Germany to the inquiry of the Government of Ireland, which is vouched for by neither Briscoe nor the Irish Government.

GRAY

DOCUMENT

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Dublin
DATED: January 22, 1945
NUMBER: 20

SECRET
URGENT

From Department and War Refugee Board

Reference your 9 of January 17

Please express to Irish authorities this Government's appreciation of their humane initiative in the matter of threatened Jewish inmates of German camps.

In this connection, Department and WRB would greatly appreciate it if Irish government could inform German Government that the reply of German authorities to Ireland has been noted by the Government of the United States, and this Government accordingly expects that Jewish and other survivors of these and other concentration, detention and labor camps in Germany and German-controlled territory will be kept alive by German authorities.

In view of the nearness of Oswiecim and Birkenau to the front, it is urgent that the above communication reach German authorities with the greatest possible speed.

STETTIN LUS.

- 1119 -

DOCUMENT

396

DCG-1651

Dublin

Dated February 6, 1945
Rec'd 5:25 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington

26, February 6, 2 p.m.

I have just received from External Affairs (reference my 19, January 29,) the following information. Irish Charge in Berlin made inquiry as instructed and was informed that inmates of the two camps in question had been evacuated to points in the interior. Irish representative, of course, makes no suggestion as to truth or falsehood of this reply.

GRAY

— 1190 —
1190
397
MH-1904
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement (SECRET W)

Bern
Dated January 25, 1945.
Rec'd 10:10 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington

520, January 25, noon.

FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND

Substance Department's 368, January 22, was delivered in an
urgent note to Federal Political Department on January 24.

HUDDLE

DOCUMENT

DCG

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

January 9, 1945
5 p.m.

AMLEGATION
BERN

127

The following for Huddle and McClelland is WRB 356.

In view of well-known German practice of exterminating Jews surviving in any area previous to its evacuation, Department and WRB consider it necessary once more to draw attention of Swiss and Intercross authorities to the danger faced by the Jewish survivors in German-controlled territory.

Accordingly, it will be appreciated if you will visit newly appointed Swiss Foreign Minister and President of Intercross, and urge that continued efforts be made from now on to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe. You should specifically mention in this connection the three largest concentrations of Jews in Axis territory known to exist, viz. Lodz with 60,000 to 80,000 inmates, Theresienstadt with 40,000 to 60,000 inmates, and camps near Vienna with 18,000 inmates, and you should also mention any other localities or regions where Jews are believed by you to survive.

In your conference with Swiss Foreign Minister and Intercross President it should be made clear that this Government considers that frequent and extended visits of Swiss Consuls and Intercross delegates to places and regions where Jews are concentrated constitute one of the most effective means of preventing their further extermination. This method proved its efficacy in Budapest where, thanks to the presence of Swiss and Intercross personnel, many lives appear to have been saved.

Furthermore, you should emphasize to Foreign Minister and Intercross President the mounting evidence of confusion among local German officials and their increasing accessibility to psychological pressure seeking to dissuade them from executing extermination policies ordered by certain German authorities, and urge that full advantage be taken of this state of mind in the interest of saving lives, through unofficial as well as official channels.

More particularly, in view of German consent to permit Intercross inspection and care for Hungarian Jews engaged in forced labor in Germany and German-occupied territory (enclosure 1 to your despatch 10132 of December 6), please request immediate and

continuing Intercross action to safeguard lives of this largest group of Jews surviving under German rule.

Please endeavor to make clear to Swiss and Intercross that the activities suggested above should be actively pursued as long as the danger continues.

Please advise Department and WEB of Swiss and Intercross reaction.

The following from WEB for McClelland:

It would be helpful if you inquire at frequent intervals what specific action Swiss and Intercross are taking to carry out the above suggestions.

In view of the situation as outlined above and in view of your recent reports indicating effectiveness of publicity and other forms of psychological pressure upon German officials, you are requested to make special efforts through all channels available to you to increase such pressure with a view to safeguarding the lives of the surviving victims of Nazi persecution.

STETTINIUS
(GHW)

DOCUMENT

399

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: January 27, 1945
NUMBER: 581

SECRET

The following is for WRB.

The substance of WRB's message 356 has been brought to the attention of all competent authorities of Federal Political Department and ICRC and discussed with them earnestly. See Department's 127 of the ninth of January. On the fifteenth of January, I took the matter up with Minister Walter Stucki at this time in charge of Foreign Office awaiting assumption of duty of the Foreign Minister (newly appointed). Have approached Petit Pierre, and officials of Foreign Interests Division. It is said by the Foreign Office that official Swiss representatives have thus far not been able to visit any of the three camps names Viz-Vienna, Lodz, Thereisienstadt. In addition, it feels that there is considerable doubt of possibility of its representative making frequent or extended visits to locations where Jews are concentrated unless it can be satisfactorily established that persons are there who legally fall under protection of Swiss. However, it is stated by the Swiss that every attempt will be made in regard to this and they think that camps near Vienna likely offer most favorable prospects as in that vicinity there are numerous Swiss interests. The Swiss will attempt to take complete advantage for purposes indicated by you.

When interviewed on the matter by McClelland, President Burckhardt ICRC assured him that committee purposed continue doing all in its power to aid in every possible manner Jews and other surviving victims Nazi persecution still in hands of Germans. Therefore, ICRC is endeavoring to enlarge the number of its delegates in Germany. It was urged by McClelland that ICRC continue this effort as the more competent and energetic men on spot, as internal confusion increases in Germany the greater will be chance of influencing officials of Germany and possibly dissuading them from carrying out policies of extermination.

Shortly ICRC will report on extent of supervision which it has been able to exercise over Hungarian Jewish deportees working in territory of Reich. Especially in the last six weeks this supervision has been fairly satisfactory in Austria but is probably less extensive within Germany.

HUDDLE

- 1124 -

DOCUMENT

400

EAS
Distribution of true
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arrangement. (SECRET W)

February 12, 1945
Midnight

AMLEGATION
BERN

677

The following for Huddle and McClelland is WRB 399.

Reference your 869, 885, and 887 of February 8, appreciate
your energetic steps.

In pursuing them further, will you please explain, with
special reference to your 887, that Department's 127 of January 9
had in mind indirect influence of Swiss consular officials ex-
ercised by their presence near places where Jews are concentrated
and such informal conversations which they could hold on the spot
rather than official acts of intercession.

GREW
(Acting)
(CLW)

DOCUMENT

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET-W)

January 19, 1945
8 p.m.

ALLEGATION
STOCKHOLM

106

The following for Johnson is WRB 293.

In view of well-known German practice of exterminating Jews surviving in any area previous to its evacuation, Department and WRB consider it necessary once more to draw attention of Swedish authorities to the danger faced by the Jewish survivors in German-controlled territory.

Accordingly, it will be appreciated if you will visit Swedish Foreign Minister, and urge that continued efforts be made from now on to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe. You should specifically mention in this connection the four largest concentrations of Jews in Axis territory known to exist, viz. Lodz with 60,000 to 80,000 inmates, Theresienstadt with 40,000 to 60,000 inmates, camps near Vienna with 18,000 inmates, and camp Belsenbergen with 9,000 inmates, and you should also mention any other localities or regions where Jews are believed by you to survive.

In your conference with Swedish Foreign Minister it should be made clear that this Government considers that frequent and extended visits of Swedish Consuls to places and regions where Jews are concentrated constitute one of the most effective means of preventing their further extermination. This method proved its efficacy in Budapest where, thanks to the presence of Swedish personnel, many lives appear to have been saved.

More particularly, in view of large number of relief parcels recently reaching camp Belsenbergen, with the assistance of Swedish YMCA and Red Cross, please urge upon these organizations the desirability of their delegates being stationed in or sent on an extended visit to that camp, to assist in the distribution of such parcels. You may explain informally that this suggestion is made in the light of the above considerations with a view to safeguarding the lives of over 9,000 inmates reported to be in Belsen-Bergen.

Furthermore, please emphasize to Foreign Minister the mounting evidence of confusion among local German officials and their increasing accessibility to psychological pressure seeking to dissuade them from executing extermination policies ordered by cer-

tain German authorities, and urge that full advantage be taken of this state of mind in the interest of saving lives, through un-official as well as official channels.

Please endeavor to make clear to Swedes that the activities suggested above should be actively pursued as long as the danger continues.

Please advise Department and WRE of Swedish reaction.

The following from WRE for Minister Johnson and Olsen:

It would be helpful if you inquire at frequent intervals what specific action Swedes are taking to carry out the above suggestions.

In view of the situation as outlined above and in view of recent reports indicating effectiveness of publicity and other forms of psychological pressure upon German officials, you are requested to make special efforts through all channels available to you to increase such pressure with a view to safeguarding the lives of the surviving victims of Nazi persecution.

STETTINIUS
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

402

MF-83

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Stockholm

Dated February 7, 1945
Rec'd 11:55 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

483, February 7. 9 p.m.

SECRET

I have personally discussed briefly with Foreign Minister Gunther and several times at length with Von Post substance Department's 106, January 19, 8 p.m. (WRB 293). Official Swedish reaction entirely favorable but both Gunther and Post skeptical that Germans would be in any way amenable to Swedish suggestions in this matter. Full memorandum of our views was transmitted by Foreign Office to Swedish Minister Richert at Berlin who has replied that in his opinion approach by Sweden alone to German Government under present conditions would have completely negative results. Richert also reported German authorities entertaining no requests by Swedes or others to visit these Jewish concentration camps. Foreign Office then on February 3 sent instructions to Swedish Ministers Berlin and Bern to take up secretly with Swiss Government and Vatican through Papal Nuncio at Berlin suggestion that Sweden, Switzerland and Vatican make joint approach in this matter to German authorities pointing out deep concern aroused by statements attributed to Goebbels in DAS Reich on January 21 indicating lives of Jews in camps in extreme danger and pointing out disastrous reactions on German reputation which would result if they come to harm. No reply received yet from Swedish Minister Bern but Richert reports Papal Nuncio considers such approach not only useless but might under present conditions produce effect contrary to its intentions. Same opinion expressed by Swiss Minister Berlin.

Swedish Government keenly aware of dangers and all their implications. I was assured by Post that they are examining every possibility for useful action. Fact that Swedish Government has made these exploratory suggestions to Vatican and Swiss Government should be kept secret and given no publicity.

There exists bare possibility Intercross might be able to take some action. Richert expressed opinion it is only possible body which could be employed.

JOHNSON

DOCUMENT

403

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington 25, D. C.

C
O
D
Y

February 21, 1944

My dear Archbishop Cicognani:

The Swedish press has recently reported that the present regime in Slovakia headed by Dr. Josef Tiso has undertaken the registration of all Jews preliminary to their deportation. It is further reported that there are about 15,000 Jews remaining in Slovakia whose deportation is being pressed by the German Government.

President Roosevelt in establishing the War Refugee Board clearly announced the intention of the United States Government to take every action within its power to preserve the lives of those who suffer at the hands of our enemies and to rescue those whose lives are in imminent danger. In furtherance of these humanitarian objectives we earnestly seek your good offices in presenting to the Holy See the request of the War Refugee Board which has full support of this Department that efforts be made to persuade Dr. Tiso and his associates to refrain from further aiding and abetting the Nazis in their persecution of the Jews.

This Government views most seriously and will take into account in the future any part which Dr. Tiso or his associates may play in the deportation and persecutions of the Jews in Slovakia.

In view of the urgency of the matter it is possible that the Holy See may wish to express simultaneously its own views on the threatened deportations.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)

EDWARD R. STETTINIUS, JR.

His Excellency

The Most Reverend

Amleto Giovanni Cicognani

Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia,

The Apostolic Delegate,

Washington.

APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

United States of America

No. 581/42.

This No. should be prefixed
to the answer3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D. C.

February 26, 1944.

My dear Mr. Stettinius:

Referring to your letter of February 21, 1944, and my reply of February 23, 1944, concerning the welfare of the Jews remaining in Slovakia, I beg to inform you that I am in receipt of a reply from the Cardinal Secretary of State on this question.

His Eminence, the Cardinal, states that he has interested the Papal Representative in Bratislava in the condition of these Jews. The Representative sent a communication to the Secretariate of State to the effect that, although the present condition of the Jews in Slovakia is indeed sad and still uncertain, the census that was taken had only one purpose, the investigation of certain specific suspicions. Furthermore, according to a promise from the President of the Republic, Dr. Josepf Tiso, the Jews will not be persecuted, that is, will not be condemned to severe punishments, but will only be interned and will be given opportunity and facilities to withdraw to some other country.

In bringing you this communication from the Apostolic Nunciature in Bratislava I wish to assure you that the Holy See will continue its interest in the welfare of these unfortunate people.

With highest personal regard and sentiments of esteem, I beg to remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

The Honorable

Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.
Acting Secretary of State
Departments of State
Washington, D. C.

DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 3, 1944

My dear Archbishop Cicognani:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letters of March 25, and March 31, 1944. In reply, I wish to express to you, on behalf of the War Refugee Board, its deep appreciation of your speedy action in invoking the assistance of the Holy See, and the Board's gratitude to the Holy See for its efforts to assist the suffering Jews in Hungary and Rumania.

I take this opportunity to draw your particular attention to the treatment of Jews in Slovakia. The attention of the War Refugee Board has been drawn to a letter addressed by the Apostolic Delegation to Dr. Maurice L. Perlzweig, of the World Jewish Congress, on February 26, 1944.

In this letter, it was stated that

"the Holy See has taken up the interests of these unfortunate people. It seems that the census was made for the purpose of investigating certain specific suspicions. It likewise appears that the President of the Republic has promised that the Jews will not be persecuted, that is, condemned to severe punishments, but will only be interned and will be given opportunity and facilities to go to some other country.

"The Holy See will continue to take interest in the sad and uncertain condition of these unfortunate people."

In view of this Government's deep concern for the welfare of the Jews in Slovakia and elsewhere under Nazi domination, the War Refugee Board is happy to note the assurance contained in your letter to Dr. Perlzweig regarding the interest which the Holy See takes in their condition. At the same time, the common interest which the Government of the United States shares with the Holy See prompts me to bring to your attention the view that the assurances given by Dr. Tiso to the Holy See, referred to in the aforementioned letter to Dr. Perlzweig, are not of a nature to allay any fears regarding the fate of Jews in Slovakia.

Thus, the assurance that "the census was made for the purpose of investigating certain specific suspicions", is not without ambiguity since it does not contain any specific indication as to the use to which the information gained by the census will be put.

Similarly, the assurance that Jews in Slovakia "will be given opportunity and facilities to go to some other country", is of uncertain meaning since it is susceptible to the interpretation that Dr. Tiso and his associates contemplate the deportation of Jews to Poland or elsewhere, in accordance with the pattern and for the purpose heretofore evidenced in other countries under Nazi domination.

Furthermore, the War Refugee Board would appreciate the clarification of the meaning of the statement that "the Jews will not be persecuted, that is, condemned to severe punishments, but will only be interned."

It is the view of the War Refugee Board that no assurances from Dr. Tiso and his associates could be considered adequate unless they include undertakings that Jews in Slovakia will not be persecuted, and that under no circumstances will they be removed from Slovakia to Germany or to any territory occupied by the German military forces.

These observations are submitted in the earnest hope that they may assist the Holy See in any conversations with Dr. Tiso or his associates proceeding from the Department of State's letter of February 21st last to the Apostolic Delegation with respect to the Jews in Slovakia.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

His Excellency
The Most Reverend
Amleto Giovanni Cicognani,
Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia,
The Apostolic Delegate,
Washington.

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406

APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D.C.

No. 581/42

This No. Should be Prefixed to the Answer

April 25, 1944.

Mr. J.W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Referring to your letter of April 3, 1944, and my reply of April 4, 1944, I wish to inform you that I have received a reply to my communication to the Cardinal Secretary of State to the effect that Monsignor Burzio, Charge d' Affair of the Vatican, has been directed on acting for the interests of the Jewish people in Slovakia.

When further information about this matter is received, I shall immediately forward it to you.

With sentiments of esteem and every best wish, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A.G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D.C.

No. 581/42

This No. Should be Prefixed to the Answer

May 24, 1944

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, 25, D.C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

Referring to your esteemed letter of April 3, 1944, regarding the treatment of Jews in Slovakia, I beg to inform you that I have received a communication from the Cardinal Secretary of State relative to this matter. I am informed that the Apostolic Nunciature in Slovakia has notified the Holy See that competent civil authorities in Slovakia have given assurances to the effect that the Government absolutely has no intentions of taking other measures against the Jews in that country, and that the question is considered as definitely settled.

Confidentially, the Apostolic Nunciature adds that, despite assurances, the possibility of new reprisals cannot be excluded. The Holy See will continue to interest itself in the welfare of these Jews and will do everything within its power to protect and assist them.

With sentiments of esteem and highest personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A.G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 21, 1944

My dear Archbishop Cicognani:

Referring to Mr. Stettinius' letter of February 21, 1944, and my letter of April 3, 1944, with respect to the plight of the Jews in Slovakia, I regret to report that information reaching the Board's representative at Bern indicates that the authorities in Slovakia are now resuming the forced deportation of Jews.

Since, however, the reservation contained in penultimate paragraph of your letter of May 24, 1944 (your No. 581/42) has been borne in mind, the renewal of deportations by Dr. Tiso and his associates has not been altogether unexpected. Nevertheless, the resumption of deportations by them makes it appropriate for the Board to reiterate that this Government views most seriously and will take into account in the future any part which Dr. Tiso or his associates have played in the deportation or other persecution of the Jews in Slovakia.

We are advised that Carol Sidor, a member of Dr. Tiso's entourage may yet be at Vatican City. I express the earnest hope that the Holy See may find it appropriate to inform Dr. Tiso through Mr. Sidor or other wise of the views of this Government.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

His Excellency,
The Most Reverend,
Amleto Giovanni Cicognani,
Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia,
The Apostolic Delegate,
Washington, D. C.

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington 8, D.C.

No. 581/42

This No. Should be Prefixed to the Answer

September 23, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

I wish to acknowledge your esteemed communication of September 21, 1944, informing me that according to reports reaching the War Refugee Board the authorities in Slovakia have resumed the forced deportation of Jews.

I shall inform the Holy See without delay regarding the attitude of the Government of the United States in respect to all authorities responsible for such deportation or other persecution of Jews in Slovakia, and I trust that appropriate representations will result in some beneficial change in the situation.

For your confidential information I may state that just in these days I have received from Vatican City a delayed despatch, dated May 20, 1944, in answer to a particular request for news of certain Jewish persons interned at Theresienstadt, Bohemia. When the matter was presented by the Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin to the German Foreign Minister, he immediately replied that since the persons involved were Jews the German Government could not grant the request to furnish news of them. The Holy See informs me that in all similar cases it has been impossible to obtain any positive result in dealing with the German authorities.

With the assurances of my highest consideration and of my deep personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A.G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director, War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D.C.

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

3339 Massachusetts Avenue

United States of America

Washington, D.C.

October 2, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D.C.

My dear Mr. Pehle,

I have just received from the Vatican Secretariate of State a response to the radiogram which, as I advised in my letter of September 23rd, I despatched regarding the reported intensification of anti-Jewish measures by the Government of Slovakia. I am informed that, even prior to receipt of this communication, it had come to the attention of the Holy See that the situation of non-Aryans in Slovakia had become more critical. In consequence of these reports, the Holy See immediately made representations to the Slovakian Government, and at the same time exhorted the Bishops of Slovakia to increase their work of relief on behalf of the victims of racial discrimination. In addition, His Excellency, Mr. Myron C. Taylor, has been duly advised of the steps thus taken.

With sentiments of esteem and with every best wish I
remain

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

United States of America

3339 Massachusetts Avenue

Washington, D. C.

Mr. J.W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

October 14, 1944.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I have received the following communication from the Secretariate of State, Vatican City: The Holy See has continued its efforts in favor of the Jews in Slovakia. According to the Apostolic Nunciature in Bratislava, on October 5th the Minister of Foreign Affairs notified the German Legation that the Slovak Government could not consent to the deportation of Jews since they are under the protection of the Constitution and Laws of Slovakia.

Likewise, Mr. Carol Sidor wrote as follows to the Vatican: Jews having American citizenship, who have asked the protection of the Slovakian Government, have been gathered together and are living in a castle at Marianka where they are protected by Slovak police.

Referring to your letter of September 21, 1944, I wish to say that the Secretariate of State assures me that your message for Dr. Tiso has been transmitted to the Apostolic Nunciature in Bratislava.

Any further information that I receive concerning these matters will be forwarded to you immediately.

With sentiments of esteem and every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours.

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

3339 Massachusetts Avenue

United States of America

Washington 8, D.C.

November 14, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I wish to convey to you the substance of a message recently received from the Secretariate of State, Vatican City:

The Apostolic Nunciature in Berlin has been directed to take further and insistent steps with the German Government to permit Jews interned in Germany, especially those from Lithuania, to receive packages containing food and clothing.

The Apostolic Nunciature in Bratislava has been directed to insist anew with President Tiso in the name of the Holy Father, who indicates the obligations incumbent upon him as a priest, that he act to protect the rights of Jews in Slovakia and to assure them of just and equitable treatment.

With sentiments of esteem and every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

The Honorable
Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.
Under Secretary of State

DOCUMENT

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Delegation, Vatican City
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: December 1, 1944
NUMBER: 393

SECRET

See number 56 from the Department of the twenty sixth of October and 64 of the eleventh of November.

In reply to my communication a note dated the twenty sixth of November from the Vatican states that unfortunately Nunciatore in Bratislava has not been able to secure data concerning the whereabouts of 400 Jews who were, in fact, transferred to Germany toward the middle of October from Slovakia. On being questioned repeatedly by Nunciatore and local representatives of International Red Cross Committee, the Slovakian Government invariably responded that it was ignorant of the current whereabouts of these individuals.

In addition, the Vatican note states that Holy See has lately renewed its appeals through Nunciatore to Slovakian Government that the Jews in Slovakia be treated in a humane and Christian manner and has approached the Slovakian Legation here in same sense expressing the regret that removal of Jews should have occurred contrary to assurances given before.

The Vatican note finally states that the Holy See will continue to do everything possible to relieve those suffering because of their race in the future, as in the past.

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 24 1944

My dear Archbishop Cicognani:

There is herewith transmitted a copy of the statement issued today by President Roosevelt.

Recent events have brought new tragedy to millions of people in Hungary and Rumania. The occupation of these countries by German military forces will spell added persecution, if not transportation and death, to nearly two million Jews unless the people and such native regimes as may continue to exist take measures to protect them. Consequently, the War Refugee Board earnestly seeks your good offices in presenting to the Holy See the suggestion that action by the Holy See, through the Nuncios or otherwise, may be effective to foster and facilitate the adoption of such measures of protection. The War Refugee Board is cognizant of the Holy See's deep interest in the welfare of these unfortunate people and ventures to hope that the Holy See will be able to take all appropriate action.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

His Excellency
The Most Reverend
Amleto Giovanni Cicognani,
Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia,
The Apostolic Delegate,
Washington.

Enclosure Omitted. - Ed. J

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D. C.

March 31, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

In reply to my recent communication to the Cardinal Secretary of State, Vatican City, mentioned in my letter to you under date of March 25, 1944, I received the following message:

The Holy See has taken advantage of every possible occasion to bring assistance to suffering Jewish people. Sometime ago the Apostolic Nuncios in Bucharest and Budapest were called upon to interest themselves in the lot of unfortunate Jews in Rumania and Hungary. The Appeals to these Nuncios have been repeated from time to time and now further insistent recommendations are being made by the Holy See, although, sad to say, no great assurance can be given that they will succeed.

If other information regarding this matter reaches me, I shall notify you at once.

With assurance of highest personal regards and with sentiments of esteem, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D.C.

DOCUMENT

416

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: May 26, 1944
NUMBER: 1819

SECRET

For American Representative Harold H. Tittman, Jr., Vatican City.

Please deliver the following message from the Government of the United States to the Cardinal Secretary of State:

"The wave of hate which has engulfed Europe and the consequent mass persecution, enslavement, deportation and slaughter of helpless men, women, and children have, we know, sorely grieved His Holiness. We know also that His Holiness, with great compassion for the sufferings of a large portion of mankind has labored unceasingly to reinculcate a decent regard for the dignity of man. So, too, we know of His Holiness' tireless efforts to alleviate the lot of the persecuted, the hunted and the outcast. His Holiness, we are certain, is aware of the deep feeling of abhorrence which the persecutions, mass deportations, enslavements and slaughters in France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Balkans, Norway and elsewhere have aroused in the American people. His Holiness, we are confident, is also aware of the deep concern of the Government of the United States with respect to these reversions to usages of ancient barbarism, and of its constant efforts to prevent their recurrence.

In view of the common concern of the Holy See and the Government and people of the United States with such matters, we believe it appropriate to call to the Holy See's attention the seemingly authentic reports that the present authorities in Hungary have undertaken to persecute the 800,000 Jews in Hungary merely because they are Jews, and are planning their mass slaughter both in Hungary and after deportation to Poland. The Government of the United States has warned the authorities and people of Hungary of the material consequences that will follow the perpetration of such inhuman acts of barbarism. We believe, however, that it is both timely and fitting that the Hungarian authorities and people should be reminded of the moral values involved and of the spiritual consequences that must flow from indulgence in the persecution and mass-murder of helpless men, women and children. To that end we earnestly suggest that His Holiness may find it appropriate to express himself on this subject to the authorities and people of Hungary, personally by radio and through the Nuncio and clergy in Hungary as well as through a representative of the Holy See specially despatched to Hungary for that purpose. His Holiness, we deeply hope,

may find it possible to remind the authorities and people of Hungary, among whom great numbers profess spiritual adherence to the Holy See, of the spiritual consequences of such acts and of the ecclesiastic sanctions which may be applied to the perpetrators thereof."

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

5339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, 8, D. C.

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Executive Office of the President
Washington 25, D. C.

July 7, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

In recent weeks I have had various requests from Jewish organizations and individuals asking me to seek the intervention of the Holy Father in behalf of the persecuted Jews of Hungary.

I communicated these appeals to His Eminence, the Cardinal Secretary of State, stressing the desirability of public action in order that the Bishops, clergy and laity of Hungary would cooperate to impede the massacre and persecution of the Jewish population of that country.

His Eminence now replies that the Apostolic Nunciature in Budapest has been carrying on an intense activity in behalf of the non-Aryan Hungarians, and in every way is seeking to aid and to protect them.

On Sunday, June 25th, the Holy Father addressed an open telegram to Regent Horthy to voice his personal appeal that the Regent do everything possible in favor of the many unfortunate persons who are suffering because of their race or nationality.

The Regent responded to this telegram, giving assurance that he will do everything in his power to cause the demands of humanitarian and Christian principles to prevail.

I have already communicated the substance of this letter to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, to the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe, and to the Honorable Joseph M. Proskauer, President of The American Jewish Committee.

In each instance I have requested that no publicity be given to the foregoing lest untimely publication prove a detriment to the work of the Holy See for the cause of the Jewish people of Europe.

I take this occasion to assure you that the Holy Father personally, the Holy See and its Representatives throughout Europe

will continue to take every possible measure to lessen and to impede the persecution of the Jewish people, and I ardently trust that their efforts will be productive of beneficial results.

With the assurances of my highest consideration and of my deep personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

P. S. Just now I have received your letter of July 7, 1944, which I believe answered by the foregoing. AGC.

DOCUMENT

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington 8, D. C.

July 24, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

In further reference to my letter of July 7, 1944, concerning the plight of the Jewish people in Hungary, I am pleased to inform you that I have received another communication on the subject from His Eminence, the Cardinal Secretary of State.

His Eminence states that according to a communication of July 15, 1944, from the Apostolic Nunciature in Budapest, the personal appeal of the Holy Father to Regent Horthy has lead /sig/ the latter to assume a more determined attitude of opposition to the racial laws. Likewise the members of the Catholic Hierarchy were encouraged to carry on a more intense activity in favor of victims of racial laws.

It seems that the Government of Hungary has now given assurance to His Eminence, Cardinal Seredi, Primate of Hungary, that deportations of Jewish people will cease. The Apostolic Nunciature adds that in fact the whole racial situation is somewhat improved.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, and of my deep personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

Mr. John W. Pehle,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington 25, D.C.

DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

October 20, 1944

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My dear Archbishop Cicognani:

As you are undoubtedly aware from the press, the Jews remaining in Budapest and other parts of Hungary under German control, variously reported to number between 200,000 and 300,000, are once more threatened with imminent deportation and death.

The situation in those areas is now such that it seems unlikely that approaches to the Hungarian authorities would have any beneficial effect. On the other hand, the Board feels that a public appeal broadcast by the Holy See to the people and clergy of Hungary, urging them to aid to the utmost of their abilities the temporary concealment of Jews and to oppose deportation and extermination, may well save many lives.

In bringing this suggestion to your attention, the Board is confident that you will urgently transmit it, with your own favorable recommendation, to the Holy See. The warm interest which His Holiness and Your Excellency have shown in the past in the cause of the hapless Jews of Hungary makes us hopeful that, in the present critical situation, we may once more have your generous cooperation.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

His Excellency
The Most Reverend
Amleto Giovanni Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia
The Apostolic Delegate
Washington

It is impossible, in my judgment, to pay too high a tribute to the work done by the organizations represented here this evening. There has been no call made upon them by the War Refugee Board which they did not answer with ardor and generosity. There has been no appeal from the beleaguered humans in Hitler's European dungeon to which they did not respond with zeal and vigor and compassion. They operated under terrible handicaps and against terrible odds. Yet they managed to pluck condemned men from the hands of executioners. They managed to bring children - youngsters whose whole lives had been spent in the shadow of persecution - into the light of freedom and opportunity and hope. They did more than save lives. They upheld the faith of mankind in the essential values upon which our civilization is founded.

With the liberation of Europe, there will be an even more compelling need for these services. The activities of the War Refugee Board are war-related and are confined primarily to the rescue of refugees from enemy countries. When the oppressors have been overthrown, the liberated peoples will be in desperate need of sustenance and encouragement. Beyond the help which will be given to them by the military authorities, UNRRA and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees there will be a great need for the kind of care which only voluntary agencies can provide.

In Rome today, for example, the JDC is ministering to the needs of desperate and broken remnants of the Jewish population. There is special need of food and medical care for these persecuted people. And the situation there will unquestionably be duplicated in France, in Belgium, in Holland, in Poland, in Hungary, in all the lands where the oppressor's heel has trod. Liberation will simply multiply your opportunities to be of service. It would be tragic to desert the great cause now. For the task which you are called upon to support is indispensable to the creation of the kind of world in which we hope to live.

All of you, I know, have read with shame and anger and heart-break the tales of Nazi savagery which have been unfolded as the liberation of Europe has progressed. No human being, least of all an American who has been brought up to respect freedom and the sanctity of the individual, could learn of these acts without a shuddering anguish. They are, to most of us, in a real sense incredible; and it is incredible that they should have been perpetrated by creatures shaped like men. Yet the record of what took place at Warsaw and Lublin and Kharkov, the bestial cruelty of the Gestapo in Germany and in all the lands which Germans overran, is real past all denying. I shall not try to tell you any of these tales. I know that your minds and hearts already have been seared by them.

We who have been spared these horrors have a solemn obligation to those who experienced them - an obligation imposed upon us by our

M E M O R A N D U M

In response to numerous appeals from various sources the Holy See, through the Secretariate of State, Vatican City, had transmitted the following definitive communication relative to activity in favor of the Jews in Hungary:

Whenever reports, that the situation of the Jews in Hungary was becoming worse, reached the Holy See, steps were immediately taken to assist these people and to alleviate their condition. The Holy See gives assurance that it will continue to act in favor of these Jews.

Following instructions from the Holy See the Apostolic Nunciature in Budapest has repeatedly intervened with the Hungarian Authorities so that violent and unjust measures would not be taken against the Jews in that country. The Bishops of Hungary have engaged in intense activity in favor of persecuted Jews. The action on the part of the Nunciature and the Bishops will continue as long as it is necessary.

The twenty-ninth of October was designated as a day of prayer for refugees by His Eminence, Cardinal Seredi, Archbishop of Strigonia. The Holy Father took this occasion to a personal, open telegram to the Cardinal and in this communication His Holiness again manifested his heartfelt interest in promoting the welfare of all those who are exposed to violence and persecution because of their race or religion or on account of political motives.

The above communication clearly indicates the attitude of the Holy See relative to Jews suffering in Hungary and gives the assurance that the Holy Father will in the future, as he has in the past, do everything possible in favor of these people, whether they be in Hungary or in any other European country.

November 4, 1944.

Washington, D. C.

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OFFICE OF
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 5, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Mr. John Russell, Second Secretary of the British Embassy, has just called at the Department and left with us the attached copy of a telegram dated January 25 sent to the British Embassy here by the British Foreign Office. You will note that a reply is requested and we should greatly appreciate the advice of the War Refugee Board as to the reply.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
HAYDEN RAYNOR

Hayden Raynor,
Special Assistant to
the Under Secretary

Enc.

Mr. John W. Pehle,
Acting Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure No. 1 to
letter from State Department.]

Executive officers of World Jewish Congress in London have for some time been pressing us to give favourable consideration to a proposal that United Nations should issue a new declaration concerning continuing execution of German policy of exterminating Jews in Europe. They have recently reverted to this proposal and in favour of it have maintained that deportation of Jews from Greece, Bulgaria, France and other parts of Europe and their mass execution in Poland are being systematically continued and that situation of Jews remaining in occupied territories and satellite countries is becoming increasingly perilous. They maintain that omission of any specific reference to crimes against Jews from Moscow declaration on German atrocities has caused deepest anxiety and disappointment among Jews throughout world.

2. H. M. G. are not in favour of issue of any new declaration specifically concerned with atrocities against Jews, their attitude in matter was made clear in their declaration of 17th Dec. 1942. There is nothing that could now be added to that declaration and it seems unlikely that any repetition of it would be any more successful than was original declaration in restraining Germans. There is little evidence that 1942 declaration perceptibly lessened persecution of Jews. On contrary it seemed to indicate to Germans a means whereby they could distress and embarrass Allies while among Jews it raised hopes and expectations of far-reaching action whose fulfillment has in circumstances of war proved impossible as U.S.G. will be aware from their experience at Bermuda conference and after. World Jewish Congress may be moved in part by a desire to secure from Allies some statement which they could represent as constituting a measure of recognition of separate national status for Jews.

3. Since however World Jewish Congress is mainly American in inspiration and in view of pressure which they will doubtless seek to bring to bear on U.S.G. in election year, we should prefer, before turning down present proposal, to have an indication of U.S.A.'s views and if possible some assurance that we may count upon their support, should a similar request be made to them.

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UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION

December 17, 1942

The attention of the Belgian, Czechoslovak, Greek, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norwegian, Polish, Soviet, United Kingdom, United States and Yugoslav Governments and also of the French National Committee has been drawn to numerous reports from Europe that the German authorities not content with denying to persons of Jewish race in all the territories over which their barbarous rule has been extended, the most elementary human rights, are now carrying into effect Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe.

From all the occupied countries Jews are being transported in conditions of appalling horror and brutality to Eastern Europe. In Poland, which has been made the principal Nazi slaughterhouse, the ghettos established by the German invader are being systematically emptied of all Jews except a few highly skilled workers required for war industries. None of those taken away are ever heard of again. The able-bodied are slowly worked to death in labor camps. The infirm are left to die of exposure and starvation or are deliberately massacred in mass execution. The number of victims of these bloody cruelties is reckoned in many hundreds of thousands of entirely innocent men, women and children.

The above-mentioned governments and the French National Committee condemn in the strongest possible terms this bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination. They declare that such events can only strengthen the resolve of all freedom-loving peoples to overthrow the barbarous Hitlerite tyranny. They reaffirm their solemn resolution to insure that these responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution, and to press on with the necessary practical measures to this end.

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

423



WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

February 11, 1944

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Stettinius:

Reference is made to your letter of February 5, enclosing a copy of a telegram dated January 25 from the British Foreign Office to the British Embassy here, concerning the issuance of a declaration regarding Hitler's extermination of the Jews of Europe. The advice of the War Refugee Board is requested.

There are of course two important phases of carrying out the announced policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death. One is the taking of action designed to get the Hitlerite forces and particularly their subordinates and their satellites to cease committing atrocities against the Jews and other civilian victims of enemy savagery. The other is the taking of action designed to rescue the persecuted minorities of Europe from death despite the attitude of our enemies.

The essential feature of the first phase of this job, as I see it, is to convince the leaders and the people in Germany and Germany's satellites that this Government and other members of the United Nations view most seriously the policy being followed by the enemy and are determined to see to it that those responsible will be punished. This involves not only the making of appropriate statements and representations, but also making them under such circumstances as will convince the leaders and the people in enemy countries that we mean business and seeing to it that such statements are brought home to these groups.

A program of this character offers the best potentialities for saving hundreds of thousands of lives. The number of persons we can reasonably hope to rescue despite the attitude of our enemies obviously can not be compared with the far greater number which might be saved from death by changing the attitude of enemy governments and particularly their functionaries and subordinates.

If it is a fact that, as the British state, there is little evidence that the 1942 declaration perceptibly lessened the persecution of the Jews, the question arises as to whether this declaration was issued under such circumstances and was given such publicity in the enemy countries as to maximize the effectiveness of what was said in the declaration.

In this connection, it must be borne in mind that the 1942 declaration was issued at a time when Germany and her satellites had high hopes for victory. A declaration issued at a time when Germany and her satellites know they have lost the war has potentialities so great that it can hardly be compared with the declaration which was issued in 1942.

The statement by the British that the 1942 declaration seemed to indicate to the Germans a means whereby they could distress and embarrass the Allies is not fully understood. So long as any government participating in such a declaration is determined to do all in its power to prevent the murder of the Jews, and this fact is made clear to the Germans by action as well as words, it is difficult to see how any such statement could embarrass such government. On the other hand, if the position of such government is that expressed by certain British officials to our Embassy in London in December (see Cable 8717 from Winant, December 15) - in simple terms that they were apparently willing to accept the probable death of thousands of Jews in enemy territory because of "the difficulties of disposing of any considerable number of Jews should they be rescued" - and if this attitude is known to the Germans by virtue of the actions if not the words of such government, then the contention that a declaration might embarrass such government has some significance.

With respect to the statement on the punishment of atrocities issued at the Moscow Conference, there is merit in the contention that if this declaration had specifically mentioned the atrocities against the Jews, Hitler and his cohorts might have been more convinced of our attitude on their treatment of these people. In this connection, it is noted that the British themselves place chief reliance on the 1942 declaration rather than the Moscow declaration. In view of the fact that Hitler has always specially singled out the Jews - reserving, as Secretary Hull stated in his address before Congress on November 18, "for the Jews his most brutal wrath" - there is much to be said for the fact that any statement on our part which omits any specific reference to the Jews loses much of its effectiveness in Germany and among her satellites by reason of the omission.

We are now mapping out a program of action which we feel that this Government might take designed to get Germany and her satellites to desist in their persecution of the Jews and other minority groups in Europe. In this connection, we have been actively considering the issuance of a strong declaration relating specifically to the murder of the Jews.

We expect to have ready in the near future for submission

to the members of the Board a declaration which we feel might be issued by this Government. It is anticipated, of course, that the declaration would be issued by the President.

In the meantime, it is suggested that a reply along the lines of the attached be sent to the British Embassy here. This reply has been cleared with the Treasury Department and, upon receipt of your approval, I will be glad to clear it with the War Department. When the reply is sent to the British, it is suggested that you send the text of the reply, together with the text of this letter, to Ambassador Winant for his use in discussing this matter with the British in London.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosures to Mr. McCloy of the War Department.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Enclosure

Honorable Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.,
Under Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

MEMORANDUM

The War Refugee Board has considered the message recently received from the British Embassy at Washington inquiring as to the views of the United States Government with respect to the issuance of a new declaration by the United Nations concerning the continuing execution of the German policy of exterminating Jews in Europe.

The War Refugee Board, which has been charged with carrying out the announced policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death, has under consideration the type of action which this Government might take, designed to prevail upon enemy-governments and particularly their subordinates and satellite governments to desist from persecution of the Jews and other minority groups in Europe.

The War Refugee Board has under active consideration the issuance by this Government of a strong declaration relating specifically to the murder of the Jews. It is the view of the Board that the leaders and people in Germany and in the satellite countries must be convinced that this Government and other members of the United Nations view most seriously the policy being followed by the enemy and are determined to see to it that those responsible will be punished. The Board believes that appropriate statements and representations should be pressed home to those to whom they are directed and should be issued under such circumstances as to achieve maximum effectiveness.

The reasoning of the Board is that a program of this character offers the best potentialities for saving thousands of lives. The number of persons who can be rescued despite the exit controls imposed by the enemy will be small in comparison to the number of persons who would be saved from death in the occupied areas if the policy of enemy governments could be changed. Obviously no step can be left untaken which might serve to change this policy or to weaken the will or their functionaries and subordinates to carry it out.

The Board having considered the comment of the British Government with respect to the ineffectiveness of the 1942 declaration, points out that the 1942 declaration was issued at a time when Germany had high hopes of victory. In contrast a declaration issued when Germany and the satellite governments know that they have lost the war has infinitely greater potentialities. Further, the Board lacked sufficient information for full understanding of the comment of the British Government that the 1942 declaration seemed to indicate to the Germans a means whereby they could distress and embarrass the Allies. In its view no embarrassment can possibly result to United Nations governments, participating in such a declaration under discussion, determined to do all in their power

to prevent the murder of Jews. The Board has confidence that action on the projects currently under discussion between the British and United States Governments will serve to press this determination home effectively to the Germans.

The issuance of such a declaration is under active consideration by the War Refugee Board and when a decision has been reached the British Government will be informed. In the event that an affirmative decision is taken by the Government of the United States, the British Government may wish to reconsider the position stated in the message under discussion in order that they may take parallel action.

Department of State,
Washington.

DOCUMENT

424

THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE DECLARATION OF GERMAN ATROCITIES

November 1, 1943

The United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union have received from many quarters evidence of atrocities, massacres and cold-blooded mass executions which are being perpetrated by the Hitlerite forces in the many countries they have overrun and from which they are now being steadily expelled. The brutalities of Hitlerite domination are no new thing and all the peoples or territories in their grip have suffered from the worst form of government by terror. What is new is that many of these territories are now being redeemed by the advancing armies of the liberating Powers and that in their desperation, the recoiling Hitlerite Huns are redoubling their ruthless cruelties. This is now evidenced with particular clearness by monstrous crimes of the Hitlerites on the territory of the Soviet Union which is being liberated from the Hitlerites, and on French and Italian territory.

Accordingly, the aforesaid three allied Powers, speaking in the interests of the thirty-two /thirty-three/ United Nations, hereby solemnly declare and give full warning of their declaration as follows:

At the time of the granting of any armistice to any government which may be set up in Germany, those German officers and men and members of the Nazi party who have been responsible for, or have taken a consenting part in the above atrocities, massacres and executions, will be sent back to the countries in which their abominable deeds were done in order that they may be judged and punished according to the laws of these liberated countries and of the free governments which will be created therein. Lists will be compiled in all possible detail from all these countries having regard especially to the invaded parts of the Soviet Union, to Poland and Czechoslovakia, to Yugoslavia and Greece, including Crete and other islands, to Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, France and Italy.

Thus, the Germans who take part in wholesale shooting of Italian officers or in the execution of French, Dutch, Belgian or Norwegian hostages or of Cretan peasants, or who have shared in the slaughters inflicted on the people of Poland or in territories of the Soviet Union which are now being swept clear of the enemy, will know that they will be brought back to the scene of their crimes and judged on the spot by the peoples whom they have outraged. Let those who have hitherto not

imbruad their hands with innocent blood beware lest they join the ranks of the guilty, for most assuredly the three allied Powers will pursue them to the uttermost ends of the earth and will deliver them to their accusers in order that justice may be done.

The above declaration is without prejudice to the case of the major criminals, who offences have no particular geographical localisation and who will be punished by the joint decision of the Governments of the Allies.

ROOSEVELT
CHURCHILL
STALIN

DOCUMENT

425

TELEGRAM SENT

Amlegation
Bern
991, Twenty-fourth

Plain
March 24, 1944

For the Minister from the War Refugee Board.

Tonight's radio bulletin contains an important statement by the President on refugees and Nazi persecutions.

The War Refugee Board is convinced that it is of utmost importance to undertake at once an organized and concentrated effort to make clear, by all appropriate means, to all Axis satellites that the Allied Governments view in a most serious light their assistance in any form to Hitler's program to exterminate the Jews, and other similar groups, regarding all such action as criminal participation in organized murder. The Board also believes it necessary to make clear to the satellites by all possible means, its intention to do everything in its power to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of death, in order not only to give the satellites a clear view of the attitude of this country in the matter, but also of the opportunities which exist for assisting in the execution of our policy. The Board feels very strongly that a campaign of this kind must be made through all possible channels and be constantly repeated at every available opportunity.

You are requested to see that the utmost publicity be immediately given to the President's statement in local newspapers, radio, and in any other manner feasible. Please make every endeavor to have this publicity included on such radio broadcasts for foreign consumption as may emanate from the country to which you are accredited. It would be extremely helpful if you could obtain favorable comment from prominent governmental or other personages with respect to the statement for use in connection with the publicity program.

For your information, in view of the importance of the statement and the program which it implements, the Office of War Information expects to employ its full facilities in calling this matter and appropriate comment thereon to the attention of Axis, satellite and other countries.

You are requested to report by cable as soon as possible the measures you have taken to comply with these instructions together with the results thereof. Significant clippings and official comment should be sent by airmail. It must be borne in mind that the effectiveness of this statement will depend in large measure upon the extent to which adequate publicity can be obtained for it, particularly in German controlled Europe.

This cable has been cleared with the Office of War Information.

HULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

426

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, London
DATED: May 17, 1944
NUMBER: 3934

SECRET

American Embassy in Moscow has been informed of the contents of your 3641 of May 4 and has been requested to endeavor to have Russian broadcasts in appropriate languages beamed on Germany and German-satellite countries transmit warnings to German and German-satellite military and civilian personnel carrying out deportation proceedings that they personally will be held responsible by the United Nations for their actions and the deaths that may result from deportation. The Russian Foreign Office is also being approached in an attempt to use its influence upon the satellite governments and populations by all possible means to cause their resistance to German demands for the deportation and persecution of minority groups under their control.

Please make similar endeavors with regard to the Ministry of Information and the Foreign Office. Please consult with Schoenfeld in this matter with a view to having Czech Government request Moscow to take all possible action to protect Czech nationals in Sub-Carpatho-Russia.

For your information, the OWI transmitters are carrying similar warnings. The Embassy at Ankara states that the Turk Consul at Budapest had sent the Foreign Office word that every Jew entering Turk Consulate there was arrested as soon as he left and transported to an unknown place.

The Vatican is being approached with a view to obtaining its support in applying pressure on satellites, particularly Hungary, in this matter.

Action being taken on your 3642 through Ankara.

HULL

DOCUMENT

Amlegation
Bern
2215, twenty-ninth

Plain
June 29, 1944

The cable below is for Garrison and McClelland from War Refugee Board.

The following is the text of a statement by Francis J. Spellman, Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, released today by the OWI. This statement will, of course, be short-waved to appropriate areas but such additional use as may be made of it by local papers and radio stations will be helpful, and to this end please make appropriate efforts. Text follows:

QUOTE: Almost on the feast of Pentecost, the day on which the Church of Christ emphasizes the supranational, supraracial character of her mission, we learned that the government of Hungary had agreed to enforce against the Jewish people a code of discriminatory laws. We were told that this unhappy segment of Israel in Hungary is being herded into Ghettos after its homes and its shops had been systematically looted and pillaged.

This announcement has shocked all men and women who cherish a sense of justice and of human sympathy. It is in direct contradiction of the doctrines of the Catholic Faith professed by the vast majority of the Hungarian people. It is a negation of the noblest pages of Hungarian history and cultural tradition.

Through the stormy ages Hungarian Catholics have been loyal to the lofty principles of justice, mercy and charity proclaimed by Our Divine Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. They have been steadfast whether under attack by the Mongols and the Turks in centuries past or in our own times under the bitter persecution of Bela Kun and his cruel cohorts.

It seems incredible, therefore, that a nation which has been so consistently true to the impulses of human kindness and the teachings of the Catholic Church should now yield to a false, pagan code of tyranny because of blood and race. How can men of good will fail to heed those solemn words of Pope Pius XI: INNERQUOTE Abraham is called our patriarch, our ancestor. Anti-semitism is not compatible with the sublime reality of this text. It is a movement in which we Christians cannot share. Spiritually we are Semites. END INNERQUOTE

One of the great lessons to be learned from the life of Hungary's king and Patron Saint is that no minority should be oppressed. For injustices of whatever kind can wreck and destroy the integrity of any nation's life.

Nearly a thousand years ago, St. Stephen, King of Hungary, received his crown from Pope Sylvester II. He realized that Hungary was destined by the very exigencies of geography to be the crossroads of Europe where diverse racial stocks would necessarily meet. St. Stephen pledged himself and his people to live as common children of a loving mother country.

The same saintly national hero dreamed always of Hungary as a INNERQUOTE regnum Marianum, END INNERQUOTE as a realm of Mary. To this day, the coinage and the postage stamps of the country bear the figure of Mary, the Mother of Mankind. It would be all the more tragic, therefore, if a people so devoted to Mary, the Jewish Maiden who was the Mother of the Messiah, should freely countenance cruel laws calculated to despoil and annihilate the race from which Jesus and Mary sprang.

It is incredible that a people with such profound Christian faith, with its glorious history, with the oldest parliamentary tradition on the Continent, would join in a hymn of hatred and willingly submit to the blood lust and brigandage of tyranny.

No man can love God and hate his brother. No one who hates his brother can be a faithful follower of the gentle Christ. UNQUOTE

You are authorized to bring this statement to the attention of Hungarian and other satellite authorities through such channels as may be available to you.

Sent to Bern. Repeated to Ankara, Lisbon, Madrid and Stockholm.

HULL

DOCUMENT

428

MMS

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (Secret).

June 29, 1944
7 p.m.

Amembassy,
Ankara.
583

Congressman Bloom, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, has introduced the following resolution in the House:

QUOTE Recognizing that the United States Government has demonstrated its determination to take all measures within its power to rescue Jews and other victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death at the hands of Nazis by its actions; and

Recognizing that full advantage has not been taken of the great opportunities for the evacuation of refugees in the Balkan countries through Turkey, be it therefore Resolved:

That the Secretary of State be requested by the House of Representatives of the United States to urge that the Government of Turkey facilitate, in the interests of humanity, the entry of refugees who can escape from the Nazis into Turkey and establish a refugee camp in which such persons can be temporarily sheltered on its territory. UNQUOTE

If it will be helpful, in your discretion, this pending resolution may be used by you in bringing further pressure on the Turkish Government and given local publicity.

This is WRB cable to Ankara No. 58.

HULL
(G.L. W.)

DOCUMENT

429

AMEMBASSY,
CIRCULAR, JUNE TWENTY-EIGHT

The cable below is from War Refugee Board.

The following is the text of a resolution which was unanimously approved today by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives:

QUOTE Resolved, That the House of Representatives hereby expresses its deep concern over the plight of the threatened millions in Nazi-occupied and Nazi-dominated territories. The House of Representatives expresses its approval of the activities of the War Refugee Board, which is facilitating the actual rescue of persons so exposed, furnishing relief to such persons by making available food and other supplies, and attempting to influence through psychological and other measures the attitudes of both the leaders and rank and file populations in those territories where extermination of minority groups is imminent, and be it further

Resolved, That the House of Representatives is not content merely to join with those who have expressed their horror at the barbarism of the governments involved in the cruelties herein condemned, but hereby expresses its determination that the criminals who are guilty of this inhuman conduct shall be brought to justice, and hereby requests the Secretary of State to convey, through such means as he may find appropriate, this concern and determination of the House of Representatives. This concern and determination, while addressed to all Nazi-controlled territories, is particularly directed to Hungary, where the lives of a million Jews hang in the balance. At this historic moment, when the tide of military battle has turned decisively in favor of the United Nations, the House of Representatives of the United States of America calls upon the Nazis and all their satellites to stem the tide of inhumanity toward helpless peoples. UNQUOTE.

You are requested to convey the contents of this resolution to the appropriate authorities and to use all possible means to give the resolution the widest possible publicity, particularly in Europe. The cooperation of OWI should be solicited.

In addition, through such channels as may be available to you, this action of the House of Representatives should be brought to the attention of the Hungarian Government.

Sent to London. Repeated to Ankara, Madrid, Lisbon, Stockholm, and Bern.

HULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

430

ME

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (Restricted)

July 15, 1944
11 p.m.

Amlegation
Stockholm
Circular

QUOTE We solemnly declare that the Hungarian people in their immense majority condemn with horror and disgust the abominable crimes perpetrated by Hungarian Quislings and their subordinates against the Jews and other people in Hungary.

QUOTE We emphasize that these crimes are committed in flagrant violation of the Christian, humanitarian and liberty loving spirit and tradition of true Hungarians.

QUOTE Consequently, we have felt it our duty to give a solemn warning to all Hungarians from the highest to the lowest and remind hereby every Hungarian who may be a perpetrator of or an accessory to these crimes, that he will have to bear full responsibility for his acts and will not be permitted to invoke as an extenuating circumstance the fact that he has only carried out orders of a superior authority.

QUOTE We address ourselves to all true Hungarians who condemn these ignominious cruelties and request them to extend all possible assistance to their persecuted and tortured fellow-countrymen. END
QUOTE

HULL
(HSF)

DOCUMENT

431

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: October 24, 1944
NUMBER: 3618

SECRET

The following from Department and War Refugee Board is for Harrison and McClelland.

Reference is made to Secretary Hull's statement of October 10, 1944, reported in the Radio Bulletin of the same date.

For your information, Governor Thomas E. Dewey, Republican candidate for President, issued the following statement on October 19, 1944:

QUOTE Information comes to this country from unquestionably reliable sources that the Nazis, trapped and knowing that they are faced with inevitable defeat, are now resorting to the known gangster terror device of threatening to exterminate their very victims -- Poles, Jews and other non-German nationals -- now imprisoned by them in their horrible concentration camps in parts of Poland and other countries still occupied by the Nazis.

The civilized world is now in a position in unmistakable terms to warn the Nazis -- military commanders, members of the German Government, their aiders, abettors and supporters -- that certain and inevitable justice awaits them for these brutal and wanton murders if their schemes should be carried out.

I am happy to note that our State Department has issued a warning that INNERQUOTE if these plans are carried out those guilty of such murderous acts will be brought to justice and pay the penalty for their heinous crimes END INNERQUOTE American public opinion will fully support the statement issued by our Department of State. UNQUOTE.

You are requested to convey the contents of the foregoing statements to the appropriate authorities and to use all possible means to give the statements the widest publicity through any channels that may be available to you.

This is WRB cable No. 231.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

January 6, 1945

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Davis:

Reference is made to my letter to you of October 31, 1944, and to Mr. Walter Carroll's letter to me of November 4, 1944, regarding the psychological warfare measures which can be taken to counteract the ever increasing Nazi ruthlessness which has already caused the deaths of millions of innocent persons, particularly those of the Jewish faith.

Since the above exchange of letters, information available to the Board points to mounting evidence that within the rank and file of German officialdom, confusion and division of views have set in with regard to the Jewish question. Officials on the spot, whether because of fear of punishment, because of a desire to establish an alibi, or because of defects in the Nazi machinery of control, do not seem so determined as they were formerly to follow to the letter instructions from the authorities in Berlin with regard to the treatment of Jews. On the other hand, the policy of the central German authorities has, if anything, grown even more ruthless. Apparently it is the German policy to exterminate the Jews still alive in German controlled territory as such territory is evacuated in the face of Allied advances. Thus, it is ironically true that the danger to these Jews increases with every Allied military success.

Our reports point to the over-riding importance of increasing at this time the psychological warfare pressure on the local Nazi and satellite officials. Heavy emphasis on General Eisenhower's statement of November 8, 1944, a copy of which is attached, would be particularly helpful. In this connection I am sure you will be interested in knowing that reports which the Board has received from Hungary indicate that your programs played an important role in halting the deportations of Jews from Hungary.

For your assistance in formulating a psychological warfare program along the lines mentioned above, there is indicated below the principal concentrations of Jews remaining in German controlled territory according to the most recent information available to the Board:

Lodz, Poland	60,000 - 80,000
Terezin (Theresienstadt) Czechoslovakia	40,000 - 60,000

Various labor camps near Vienna	18,000
Hungarian Jews in labor camps, presumably on the Austro-Hungarian border, in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Southern Germany	100,000 - 200,000
Belsenbergen, near Hanover, Germany	1,000 - 2,000
Lithuanian Jews in labor camps in East Prussia	16,000

In view of the urgency of this matter, I would appreciate an early reply to this letter.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Hon. Elmer Davis, Director
Office of War Information
Social Security Building
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure

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433

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

January 12, 1945

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Your letter of January 6, 1945, drawing to our attention the latest information on the concentration of Jews remaining in German territory, is much appreciated. The OWI will give very careful attention to your suggestion about preparing our German programs in such a way as to have the greatest possible effect in preserving the lives of these likely victims of Nazi persecution.

I am very glad to know that information from Hungary indicates that our programs have assisted in halting the deportations of Jews from Hungary to Germany. I agree with you that the closing period of the war will probably bring more ruthlessness on the part of the German authorities and that we must do everything in our power to combat such actions. Your suggestions will be carefully considered in preparing our German output.

Sincerely,

(Signed)
WALLACE CARROLL

Wallace Carroll
Deputy Director, Area I
Overseas Operations

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

434



April 6, 1945

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My dear Mr. Secretary:

There are persistent reports and widespread fear, based on considerable internal evidence, that the Nazis will undertake a last minute orgy of vengeance and sadism against civilian detainees, especially Jews, remaining under their control. With the chaos and disorganization occurring in Germany now, the Nazi goal of extermination for these people can and is being realized by deliberate starvation and exposure, as well as by murder in cold blood. It is feared that the systematic Nazi program for mass extermination of these people, in a frenzied last minute vengeful outburst, will be carried out not only by the Nazi hierarchy but by organized or roving bands of terrorists and by individual Germans.

The War Refugee Board presents this situation to the State Department for its serious and immediate consideration. It is our strong recommendation that a new warning be issued by this Government now, directed not only toward the Nazi hierarchy but towards all groups and individuals in Germany. Such a warning should state that this Government considers death caused by deliberate neglect and starvation the same as murder in cold blood; that such acts are war crimes and that all who share the guilt, whoever and wherever they may be, will be sought out and punished.

The warning might also include or refer to the following which was expressed by the President in his statement of March 24, 1944:

"Hitler is committing these crimes against humanity in the name of the German people. I ask every German and every man everywhere under Nazi domination to show the world by his action that in his heart he does not share these insane criminal desires. Let him hide these pursued victims, help them to get over their borders, and

do what he can to save them from the Nazi hangman. I ask him also to keep watch, and to record the evidence that will one day be used to convict the guilty."

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State.

DOCUMENT

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

435

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Bern
DATED: April 29, 1944
NUMBER: 1498

CONFIDENTIAL

From War Refugee Board for Harrison.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 10.

Following for Intercross:

QUOTE In full agreement with interested American welfare agencies War Refugee Board requests Intercross to approach the German and satellite governments, through appropriate and expedient channels, to bring about with respect to Jews and other persons, detained, interned, or otherwise confined because of race, religion, or political belief (1) treatment equal to that accorded civilian internees to whom Geneva Convention is currently applied by analogy or (2) equal treatment of such persons to the extent at least that reception and distribution of packages under Intercross supervision be permitted them under guarantees equal to those in effect with respect to the civilian internees referred to in (1) above. War Refugee Board feels strongly that (1) above is preferable and suggests that (2) should be only if in the judgment of Intercross (1) is unobtainable.

Furthermore, War Refugee Board requests Intercross to make every effort to obtain, wherever possible, for Jews and other victims of Nazi oppression (who though they may not be physically interned have been singled out for persecution) facilities and opportunities to obtain food and other necessities on the basis of equality with the local population both from local or domestic sources and through Intercross channels. In addition, War Refugee Board calls attention to the Board's efforts to bring Jews and other persecuted persons out of German controlled territory in as large numbers as possible. The Board urges that Intercross, through appropriate approaches to the German and other authorities in German controlled territory and through any other means possible, do what it can to assist the departure of these persecuted peoples to neutral countries.

The Board is cognizant of unceasing efforts of Intercross in the direction of making this general program a reality and is appreciative of the humanitarian activities of Intercross. The Board is ready to assist Intercross in every way to effectuate the realization of all of the foregoing UNQUOTE

Following for Harrison.

War Refugee Board considers the proposed approaches to the German and other authorities through Intercross are of utmost importance to the success of its program. In view of recent military developments, including the reported situation in Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania, the Board is convinced that special emphasis should be placed on efforts to persuade the Germans to improve the condition of Jews and other similar groups within occupied territories. Accordingly, you are requested to do everything possible to support the proposals being made to Intercross. If at any time you believe that the Swiss Government would be willing to make similar approaches to the Germans or otherwise assist in the program outlined herein, you are authorized informally to make a request for such action to the Swiss on behalf of this Government.

HULL

DOCUMENT

436

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 17, 1944
NUMBER: 3144

SECRET

A fifteen paragraph letter dated May 12 has been received from the President of IRC, Mr. Max Huber, in reply to my May 2 letter which contained information set forth in April 29 telegram No. 1498 from the Department. My May 17 telegram No. 3147 transmitted first thirteen paragraphs of text of Huber's letter under reference, in which "subjects" means "the Jews"; "umpire" means "German authorities"; "league" means "world Jewish Congress"; "respondents" mean "the International Committee of the Red Cross"; and "inquirer" means "War Refugee Boards".

The following is a paraphrase of paragraph fourteen: Nevertheless so far as conditions permitted IRC have been instrumental in facilitating emigration of Jews from some southeastern European countries to Palestine. Memorandum dated May 5 describing work done has been furnished U. S. Legation at Bern by us. (Note from Legation: If and when mailing facilities permit, copy will be forwarded by microfilm.) As regards responsibility which we can assume primarily in matter of safe conduct for vessels it does not depend upon ourselves but rather on interested governments and on circumstances.

As regards fifteenth paragraph: It is desire of IRC that War Refugee Board be informed but that since any publicity can be prejudicial to some persons we are trying to help, it requests that communication be kept confidential.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

437

Plain
Bern
DATED: May 17, 1944
REC'D: 3:23 a.m. 18th

Secretary of State
Washington
3147, Seventeenth

One. I beg to thank you sincerely for your kind letter of 2 May, 1944, in which you reproduce message from INQUIRER requesting respondents to approach certain governments with view to obtaining for subjects and other persons interned treatment comparable with that which is accorded to civilian internees to whom Geneva Convention relative to treatment of prisoners of war is applied by analogy or failing such treatment that such persons be placed on equal footing with civilian internees as regards permission to receive relief.

Two. We desire in first place to point out that steps of this nature by respondents would go far beyond limits of their traditional capacity and that governments to whom such request might be addressed would not fail to view this proposal from that particular angle.

Three. In provisions of international agreements respondents have only slender basis upon which to found their humanitarian activities. Latter are therefore dependent upon goodwill of belligerent states and can only take practical shape insofar as they are accepted or solicited by governments concerned.

Four. Consequently respondents might lay themselves upon to objection that they were going beyond limits of their competences and trespassing upon internal concerns of state should they attempt to act on behalf of certain categories of persons whom that state considered to be subject exclusively to its domestic legislation.

Five. Exceptional position of respondents as neutral intermediary between belligerent countries precludes their seeking other solutions than those which offer practical hope of realization through appropriate action in quarters where best results may be expected.

Six. The proposal contained in point one of message from INQUIRER has we may add been submitted on several occasions to respondents by League. On each occasion respondents were obliged to answer the numerous endeavors they had made on behalf of subjects had invariably met with negative answer with exception of certain concessions with regards to relief measures.

Seven. Under these circumstances we must admit that application by respondents to umpire in this matter would not only have no prospect of success but might even in eyes of umpire appear - quite unjustifiable - dictated by political rather than by humanitarian motives.

Eight. We deeply regret having to confine ourselves to purely relief activities on behalf of persons who do not enjoy protection of convention applicable to prisoners of war and civilian internees. This circumstance is not due to absence of endeavors of all kinds by respondents on behalf of such persons - irrespective of race - with view to their assimilation with civilian internees by reason of their enemy nationality. Unfortunately not one of these approaches has been successful.

Nine. As regards point two respondents are compelled in view of experiences in this field to admit likewise fact that such application would be considered incompatible with domestic legislation of detaining power and moreover would constitute serious menace not only to general activities of respondents on behalf of prisoners of war and civilian interness but also endanger limited possibilities which we enjoy of assisting few groups of persons who are not protected either directly or by analogy by international conventions. Respondents must it will be remembered take extreme care that province in which belligerents have accepted our ministrations should not be closed to future action.

Ten. Same observation applies to proposal contained in last paragraph of message from INQUIRER "to rescue from the occupied areas subjects and other persons who are victims of persecution". Any such attempt by respondents would at once have most unfortunate consequences for their entire work - an eventuality which they cannot conscientiously envisage.

Eleven. Since repeated and conclusive experience in this field leads us to suppose that any steps of this kind would not only be altogether fruitless but might even do more harm than good respondents must to their regret abide by proposals they have already submitted to authorities in Washington and to Inter-Governmental Committee in London. After careful consideration of problem and exploration of all avenues in other fields of action respondents are in other words compelled to confine themselves strictly to relief work within limits which circumstances prescribe.

Twelve. Scheme for relief of civilian war victims irrespective of race and religion with which INQUIRER is familiar is to our mind and for present only province in which action by respondents can produce useful results. Moreover scope of such action can be widened in obedience to conditions prevailing only insofar as publicity of any kind is avoided. In this connection we are happy to stress fact that respondents have achieved encouraging results in field of relief work. It was largely due to kind support given to our suggestions by INQUIRER short time ago

that relief activities on behalf of subjects in certain countries could be undertaken. This work is worth being pursued.

Thirteen. As regards other countries mentioned in message of INQUIRER and in which respondents are also engaged actively here too we must confine ourselves to questions of purely material relief and we shall be pleased to receive as soon as possible any assistance INQUIRER is able to give us with view to our taking practical action along lines we have submitted to their consideration on behalf of civilian war victims without distinction of race or creed.

HARRISON

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington 25, D.C.

June 24, 1944

My dear Archbishop:

In recent months, the Holy See, and Your Excellency personally have given the Government of the United States repeated indications of the concern with which you view the persecution of Jews in territories controlled by Germany and her satellites, and of your readiness to take measures intended to alleviate the sufferings of these victims of oppression. Consequently, this Government feels it appropriate to refer to you another aspect of the persecution of Jews in Axis-controlled areas in Europe.

As you are aware, the food situation is desperate for Jews and other persons detained in camps by the German and satellite governments for reasons of race, religion or political belief. These people are exposed to starvation and are in imminent danger of death. This Government feels strongly that steps should be taken at once to sustain their lives. Specifically, it is felt that the plight of these suffering people would be greatly alleviated if Germany and the satellite governments would permit them to receive treatment equal to that presently being accorded to assimilated civilian internees of American and British nationalities. It is the hope of this Government to secure this treatment in full or at least in part — a hope undoubtedly shared by the Holy See and by you personally.

In view of the extremely critical condition of these people, this Government would greatly appreciate it if you would be so good as to present this matter to the urgent attention of the Holy See. It is hoped that the Holy See will find it feasible and appropriate to use its good offices with the German and satellite governments to bring about, with respect to Jews and other persons detained, interned or otherwise confined because of race, religion or political belief, (1) treatment equal to that accorded civilian internees to whom the Geneva Convention is currently applied by analogy, or (2) equal treatment of such persons to the extent at least that reception and distribution of packages under the International

His Excellency
The Most Reverend
Amleto Giovanni Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea di Frigia
The Apostolic Delegate
Washington, D.C.

Red Cross supervision be permitted them under guarantees equal to those in effect with respect to the civilian internees referred to in (1) above.

We feel strongly that (1) above is preferable and suggest that (2) should be shought only if in the judgment of the Holy See (1) is unebtainable.

In view of the generous interest and sustained activity of the Holy See on behalf of all persecuted minorities, it is hoped that this matter may be given favorable consideration.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

EDWARD R. STETTINIUS, JR.

DOCUMENT

APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

3339 Massachusetts Avenue

Washington, D.C.

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July 27, 1944

My dear Mr. Stettinius:

In further reference to your note of June 24, 1944, concerning the status of Jews interned in Germany and other Axis-controlled countries, I am pleased to inform you of the content of a communication just received from His Eminence, the Cardinal Secretary of State.

His Eminence informs me that the Holy See hastened to ask the interest of the Apostolic Nunciatures in Germany, Roumania, Hungary, and Slovakia, for the purpose of obtaining for the unfortunate internees in question treatment similar to that granted to civilian internees to whom the provisions of the Geneva Convention are applied by analogy.

To the present His Eminence has received a response from the Apostolic Nunciature in Budapest, informing him that the Government of Hungary will authorize the sending of packages of foodstuffs through the channels of the Red Cross to persons interned in concentration camps.

I am confident that as soon as other replies are received from the various Nunciatures His Eminence will inform me of their content, and I shall be happy to transmit them to you.

With the assurances of my highest consideration and of my deep personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

The Honorable
Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.
Under Secretary of State

A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
1339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D.C.

No. 581/42

July 31, 1944

My dear Mr. Stettinius:

Following my note of July 27, 1944, on the subject of the status of civilian internees in Germany and other Axis-controlled countries, I received another communication from His Eminence, the Cardinal Secretary of State.

His Eminence informs me that the Apostolic Nunciature in Berlin has expressly treated the question with the German Government in an effort to obtain more favorable treatment for Jewish and other internees confined to concentration camps. The Apostolic Nuncio earnestly insisted that the status outlined in your letter of June 24, 1944, should be accorded to those persons who are interned for racial, religious or political belief.

In reply to these representations the German Government answered that the Protecting Powers have free access to concentration camps.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, and of my deep personal regard, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

The Honorable
Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.
Under Secretary of State

DOCUMENT

LC-157
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement
(SECRET W)

Bern
Dated December 7, 1944
Rec'd 5:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

7998, December 7, 5 p.m.

FOR WEB FROM MCCLELLAND.

I have received assurances from Burckhardt now ICRC president that German Foreign Office was definitely approached on October 2 by committee with request that Reich Government consider extending to so called "schutzaeftling" (detainees for security reasons) treatment granted by analogy to Geneva POW convention of 1929 to enemy nationals in Germany and German occupied territory. As of December one no answer had yet been received from Germans. Late in November when delegate of German Red Cross Hartmann was in Geneva this question was thoroughly discussed with him. German consul at Geneva was also urged a few days ago by ICRC to press German Foreign Office for an answer. (Department's 3925 November 18, WEB's 281).

I personally fear that little or no positive results will be forthcoming from this approach, past experience with Germans regarding similar questions, particularly the Jewish one, having shown fairly conclusively that neither German Foreign Office nor German Red Cross exercise any real control over political detainees and deportees both non-Jewish and Jewish (*) such control being in hands of SS "reichssicher heitshauptamt" at Berlin.

With reference to a somewhat similar intercession to be made by neutrals headed by Vatican (Legation's 7170 October 28 from Sternbuch to Union Orthodox Rabbis and Department's 3788 November 7 WEB's 259) initiated through Papal Nunciature in Bern, it is important to note this is motivated by desire to secure reciprocal treatment of German civilians in territory already or shortly to be occupied by forces of Allied nations. Reciprocity is to be based on Geneva Convention and guaranteed by neutrals and Vatican. In return for this guarantee it is hoped to secure various concessions from Germans concerning treatment of non-assimilated detainees under their control. In speaking of Allied nations Angelo Denati, author of proposal, had Soviet Russia particularly in mind. To this end he has subsequently attempted to bring project to Moscow's attention by various channels: through two unofficial Soviet citizens in Switzerland Sokolin and Tcherniak reputedly in contact with Moscow and through Togliatti Italian Communist

leader at present in Rome. If guarantee could be obtained from Russians to accord Geneva Convention treatment to German civilians in areas occupied and to be occupied by them it would indeed constitute a powerful lever with which to secure counter concessions from Nazis. Many months ago ICRC unofficially expressed to me their belief that any concessions which might be extracted from Soviets with regard to German POWS (even Russian agreement to deliver lists of names of those alive and well) would be invaluable in securing from Germans more favorable treatment of categories of detainees and deportees including Jews in their hands.

HUDDLE

(*) apparent omission

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TELEGRAM SENT

This telegram must
be paraphrased before
being communicated to any-
one other than a Government
agency. (BB)

January 27, 1944
11 p.m.

U. S. URGENT
AMERICAN LEGATION

BERN
279

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, GENEVA, FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD. We are familiar with the report (contained in your cable 571 of October 12, 1943, to your Washington Delegation) concerning possible feeding programs in Rumania, Theresienstadt, Slovakia and Croatia and the need of funds therefor. We desire immediate information concerning what areas you could operate in right now, assuming that necessary funds are made available to you, to provide food and medicines to Jews and other persecuted groups in German-occupied areas who are denied the facilities available to the rest of the population. Please advise where food, medicines, and other supplies can be purchased and how much money is needed. We are prepared to see that funds are made available at once for necessary operations.

HULL
(AAB)

COPIE HL

February 29th, 1944.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Sirs,

Following upon our letter of February 17th, 1944, to H.E. the American Minister in Bern, we venture to submit for your consideration the following particulars concerning relief action in regard to which the support of the War Refugee Board of the United States would be highly desirable.

The War Refugee Board, in accepting a suggestion made by us to the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees in London last autumn, was good enough to notify us that the equivalent in Swiss francs of 100,000 dollars would be available free from restrictions as to geographical areas, for use in Hungary, Rumania and neutral countries, and that the license had been issued under the name of the "Joint Distribution Committee".

The International Committee have just been credited with the sum of 429,000 Swiss francs through the Swiss National Bank, on behalf of the "Joint", and we assume that it will be mainly a matter for Mr. Saly Mayer to discuss with us particulars for the utilization of this sum. We feel, however, that it may be useful to send you herewith a scheme which has been drawn up by the "Joint Relief Commission of the International Red Cross (Commission Mixte)". Subject to an agreement being reached with the "Joint Distribution Committee", this scheme would provide for the utilization of a sum of 429,000 Swiss francs for the benefit of groups of Jews whom we consider to be in great need. This scheme aims at speedy action, without awaiting the putting into effect of any projects which might be evolved subsequently.

We have thought it advisable to apply certain rules in drawing up this programme.

I: Relief for Jews.

1. The peculiar position of Jews in the Axis countries is not a crystallised one, and the possibilities of extending relief to them which exist at any given moment may suddenly disappear. It is therefore necessary to proceed by test cases in the absence of any basis which is firmly established by international law. We have been able more than once, by means of tests, to open up fresh channels for the distribution of relief, the facilities offered to us being very variable and differing from one area to another. We should therefore very much appreciate if a certain proportion of

the sums which are placed at our disposal was to be set aside for test consignments the despatch of which would be attempted through hitherto untried channels. Whereas we are able to state almost with certainty that relief consignments to Rumania, to Theresienstadt and to the "Jüdische Unterstützungsstelle" in Cracow will reach the beneficiaries, we cannot vouch in the same way for the delivery of relief to, say, the Jews in the camp at Westerbork (Netherlands), in the camps in France and in certain camps in Upper Silesia, where we should like to make the test.

2. Being apprised of the views of the blockade authorities as regards transfer of currency to Axis countries, we shall endeavour to reduce to the lowest possible minimum any purchases which may have to be made in Hungary and Rumania, and to procure goods as far as possible in the neutral countries of Europe (pharmaceutical products and some foodstuffs, which have however become very rarified). In this connection, we should like to know if we could count on additional funds if they were to be used exclusively in Switzerland, Portugal, Sweden and possibly Turkey.

3. In order, however, to limit as far as possible the purchase which would be made in Hungary and Rumania, we wonder if the War Refugee Board would consider shipping from overseas relief in kind which we propose to stock in Geneva, and upon which we would draw according as supplies were required. This method would have the advantage of enabling us to seize as they occur certain opportunities of despatching relief supplies, without having to send out fresh appeals on each occasion. The stock which would thus be built up in Switzerland could remain under the control of the War Refugee Board which, through their representative at the American Legation in Bern, would authorize us to draw upon these reserves to the extent of the amounts proposed in the schemes and projects which would be submitted by us.

The articles which are most urgently required are:

a) warm clothing and underwear. Certain groups of Jews in Transnistria, for instance, whom our delegate has been able to visit, are practically completely deprived of clothing.

b) boots (large sizes for men).

It would meet one of the most urgent needs if, as the War Refugee Board proposes to do, we had several thousand parcels available, containing each an assortment of clothing, underwear and possibly a pair of strong boots (parcels made up separately according as they are intended for men, women or children (not infants)).

4. The same system of warehousing could usefully be applied for food parcels, perhaps several tens of thousands of these of a maximum weight of 2 kg. 1/2. The distribution of relief to

Theresienstadt is most easily carried out in the form of standard parcels. These should contain only articles which will keep some time (canned goods, sugar, condensed milk, ovaltine, etc.). These parcels could be sent also to the camps in Upper Silesia (if this is found to be possible), Croatia, the Netherlands and France. If, on the other hand, the War Refugee Board do not see their way to entertaining our proposal that clothing and food parcels be sent to us from overseas, we should be compelled to make them up ourselves, which would unavoidably entail the purchasing of certain foodstuffs in Hungary and Rumania, and this would mean transfer of Swiss francs to Axis countries.

Should the question of tonnage be an obstacle in the way of the War Refugee Board accepting our proposal to place food parcels at our disposal, we should be willing to have these consignments conveyed, against reimbursement of the freight charges, and in so far as the available tonnage would permit, by the ships which are at present plying under the sign of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and which carry supplies for the allied prisoners of war between the United States, Canada and Lisbon, on the one hand, and Lisbon-Marseille (Geneva), on the other.

5. As a general rule, we should like to stress that in this matter of relief for Jews, we proceed very discreetly, and that we endeavour to avoid any form of publicity as far as our own work is concerned. The reasons for this are

a) the fact that the various Jewish associations, for certain reasons, prefer to act independently the one from the other, and it would seem impossible to succeed in centralizing the various relief undertakings which are organized by each of these groups. It is therefore not in the interest of the aim in view to reveal to one Jewish organization what is done by another.

b) Neither is it in the interest of the Jews whom we wish to rescue from a critical situation to draw too much attention to the proposed relief action. In view of certain tendencies, it is to be feared that authorizations which already exist might be withdrawn and new difficulties raised if this plan to save certain groups of Jews were exploited for propaganda purposes.

II. Relief for concentration camps in Germany.

This desire to avoid as far as possible attracting attention to our scheme has led us to propose relief work for certain groups of civil war-victims, irrespective of race and religion. The War

Refugee Board willingly agreed to this principle, and we are therefore venturing to mention certain groups who, we feel, are deserving of assistance by the War Refugee Board in like manner to the Jews.

These groups include nationals of allied countries (Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians, Poles, Greeks, Czechs, etc.) who have been deported and are detained in the prisons and concentration camps in Germany.

Political prisoners are detained in Germany in concentration camps which are under the control of the secret police. The regime is more severe than in the prisoner of war and civil internment camps, and all the information we receive corroborates that the food in these camps is inadequate. The International Committee therefore, in response to the urgent appeals which they receive from these political prisoners and from their next-of-kin, applied on many occasions to the allied authorities and Red Cross Societies, with the object of obtaining permission to reforward food parcels to these concentration camps, as is done for allied prisoners of war and civilian internees in Germany. To their great regret, the blockade authorities firmly refused to authorize these consignments, insisting, as an essential condition, for such an authorization that these detainees should be assimilated with prisoners of war, i.e. that the stipulations of the Geneva Convention should be applied to them. Such a measure depends, however, upon the German authorities, which refuse to allow this assimilation. The International Committee regret that the blockade authorities should have laid down this condition which makes relief entirely dependent upon a decision to be taken by the detaining authorities and prevents the detainees from receiving what are very necessary food supplies.

Judging that the blockade authorities are not opposed on principle to this category for peculiarly afflicted war-victims receiving assistance, but that they are concerned chiefly with preventing the detaining country from deriving any benefit from the foodstuffs, the International Committee have endeavoured to discover some means of guaranteeing the safe distribution of relief in these camps. At the same time, they have sought to provide the blockade authorities with guarantees which would be equivalent (if not superior) to the means of control which are provided for under the Conventions of Geneva, the latter being unfortunately inapplicable in the present instance.

These guarantees are the following: thanks to certain small sums which have been received in Switzerland, we have been able to send some parcels to the principal concentration camps in Germany and even to certain camps and prisons in the occupied countries, asking that acknowledgments be returned to us personally by the beneficiaries. In certain camps (Oranienburg and Ravensbrück), our delegates have been able to ascertain on the spot that the parcels

were actually delivered, and that there was no reason to fear they had been misappropriated. We are thus able at present to send parcels to Norwegian (also to the students from Oslo), Dutch, Polish, Belgian, Greek, Czech and other deportees in Dachau, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg, Ravensbruck, and in certain other camps, but for lack of funds and parcels, we are not in a position to develop this relief action on the scale which would be necessary; at present it is still in the stage of a test process undertaken to furnish the blockade authorities with evidence that the scheme is feasible, and that fully adequate guarantees could be supplied and which we should be ready to submit for the attention of the representative of the American Legation, should the latter be interested in these various test cases.

Although the detaining authorities decline to supply the International Committee with the names of political prisoners and even with information on the strengths of the camps, this action has had a noteworthy result. The parcels which we have nevertheless been able to deliver to certain detainees have as a matter of fact acted as a snowball, and the next-of-kin, in the home countries of the deportees, having doubtless been notified by letters from the camps, are now advising us spontaneously of the names and addresses of the deportees. Thus we possess the names - and we would ask you to treat this as strictly confidential - of nearly all the Norwegians, Dutch and a large number of Poles who are political prisoners in the concentration camps. Consignments could therefore be organized systematically and we would even be in a position to receive acknowledgements from the prisoners' representatives - similarly to the procedure applied in prisoner of war camps - for any collective consignments which might be despatched.

The present problem would be to send food supplies by means of standard parcels to several thousand political prisoners (approximately 1450 Norwegians, a thousand Dutch men and women, or thereabouts, and as many Polish men and women). We do not know the strengths of the other nationalities, but feel convinced that we would have their names communicated to us if we were able at last to undertake this relief action.

We are profiting by the opportunity afforded us by the War Refugee Board, thanks to their generous support, of drawing their attention once more to this very urgent problem, and of warmly recommending that they contribute to supplying a particularly deserving and severely stricken category of war-victims with relief which might be instrumental in saving the lives of many of them.

III. Relief for children war-victims, particularly in Serbia and Slovenia.

From accurate information received from Belgrade we hear that there are at present in Belgrade and several other Serbian towns more than 80,000 children who have escaped from the areas which used to be included formerly in Yugoslavia, and which are now at-

tached to Croatia. These refugee children are in a particularly critical condition; they are undernourished and require clothing. Their health condition is pitiful. It would be necessary to organize emergency relief action for their benefit.

The same may be said of children in Slovenia (the northern section of Yugoslavia). This area was first annexed by Italy which undertook to supply it. The situation which was already serious has become worse since the events in Italy in the summer of 1943. More than 100,000 children are suffering from malnutrition. Products such as milk, sugar, chocolate, ovaltine and other strengthening foods are entirely lacking. Here too relief consignments are urgently required. We enclose a distribution plan in case it should prove useful.

The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Joint Relief Commission (Commission Mixte) undertake to apply in any future action - as in the past - measures of control as strict as possible, and to prevent any misappropriation of relief consignments. We shall proceed to carry out relief only when we have gained the conviction as far as possible that the detaining authorities will not derive any direct benefit from the relief supplies. We shall submit to the War Refugee Board - if possible through their representative at the American Legation in Bern - all the evidence which we can gather vouching for the safe arrival of relief supplies, and reports on their distribution, in all cases where our delegates have been able to be present. Thus the War Refugee Board will be in a position to judge whether it is possible to carry out a specific undertaking or not.

Further we do not think that rigid regulations for control are expedient; we have already mentioned the example (of, point II) of political prisoners in German concentration camps to whom the blockade authorities do not consider it permissible to send relief parcels so long as they are not assimilated with prisoners of war. The criterion to be selected for control should, in our opinion, be as flexible as the relief action itself; one principle must however be strictly applied, i.e. that relief must benefit only those for whom it is intended.

We are at the entire disposal of the War Refugee Board to supply them with any additional information they may desire to receive.

Yours truly,

Carl J. Burckhardt
Member of the International Committee
of the Red Cross.

DOCUMENT

444

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Bern
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 1, 1944
NUMBER: 2031

SECRET

A letter from the Intercross Committee of the Red Cross dated March 27 is summarized as follows (please refer to my number 1850 dated March 25, 1944):

1. The activities of Intercross on behalf of war victims in that part of Europe will be affected by events in Hungary and the possible occupation of Hungary and Slovakia. Certain adjustments are necessary in the joint 100,000 dollar relief program since the last possibilities of obtaining relief foodstuffs within Europe apparently are dwindling.
2. If the plans of the War Refugee Board to rescue certain particularly stricken groups of refugees are not to be too late, rapid action is necessary. The necessity of accepting the suggestion to send it (Intercross) parcels of underwear and food is urged by Intercross - please refer to paragraph three of my number 1366 dated March 8. These parcels would be stored in Geneva and only after concurrence of a representative of the War Refugee Board to whom full information and control vouchers could be supplied, would they be despatched.
3. The necessity of aid to children in certain parts of Europe and to prisoners in concentration camps is emphasized by Intercross - please see paragraphs B1 and C1 in my number 1366.
4. Acceptance of Intercross proposals is strongly recommended by the Legation.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

445

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REACHED BETWEEN UNITED STATES
AND BRITISH OFFICIALS ON EXPERIMENTAL FEEDING PROGRAM

June 12, 1944

1. The United States Government and His Majesty's Government will take immediate steps to carry out the proposals contained in Mr. Foot's letter to Mr. Berle of June 12. These include:

- (a) The immediate despatch of relief to concentration and refugee camps in enemy Europe subject to the conditions set out in the letter. It is proposed experimentally to begin with certain camps to be selected after consultation with the International Red Cross. If the conditions are observed, the experiment will be extended. Initially, shipments of 100,000 food packages per month for three months, amounting to 550 tons monthly, are contemplated.
- (b) An increase in the volume of relief consignments from Sweden to Norway, which may now be authorized by the United States and British Missions in Stockholm without reference back to Washington and London. The present maximum is 250 tons a month. This will be increased to 500 tons.
- (c) An immediate examination of the possibility of increased relief consignments to the occupied countries from Switzerland, Portugal and Spain. In particular attention will be given to increasing supplies of milk and dairy products from Switzerland to Belgium and France. This proposal must of course be governed by the availability of Swiss, Portuguese and Spanish currencies, and is therefore subject to the approval of the United States and British Treasuries.
- (d) The question of adding clothing to the food consignments under (a) will be considered after the scheme has come into operation with particular reference to the effectiveness of the supervision and control established in these camps by the International Red Cross. The International Red Cross will be asked to report on the state of clothing in camps to which food is being delivered and particularly on the quantities and quality of clothing made available to the internees under present conditions. In anticipation of conducting an experiment in the supply of clothing, arrangements will promptly be made for the procuring of 25,000 standard clothing parcels.

The implementation of the above measures will be the responsibility of the Relief Sub-Committee of the Blockade Committee, and the two Governments will forthwith give the necessary instructions to their representatives on the Committee.

In the first place supplies will be loaded as and when space is available on ships now carrying prisoner-of-war supplies. If the scheme develops to such an extent as to make extra shipping necessary an attempt will be made to obtain a Swedish ship or ships from the Baltic on the same terms as the Greek relief ships.

2. All practicable steps will be taken to further the schemes already under consideration for the reception in Sweden, Switzerland and Eire of children from enemy-occupied countries. The Swedish Government have already expressed their willingness to receive

(a) children from Nowary, and

(b) Jewish children from any part of German Europe, but are unwilling to make any further approach either to the German Government or to the Quisling Government of Norway. They have suggested that the necessary approaches should be made through the International Red Cross. They have now been asked whether they will themselves take this matter up with the International Red Cross, or whether they would prefer the Allies to do so.

(3) The Swiss Government have expressed their willingness to receive up to 50,000 children in the course of a year without assistance from the Allies, and may be willing to receive more if additional imports through the blockade can be made available. They have received assurances on this point. The only difference that has so far arisen in the discussions on this matter is that the British and United States Governments insist that the children to be received in Switzerland shall be selected by a method which will preclude a preference being given to the children of Quisling parents. It is agreed that this matter will now be taken up with the Swiss Minister in Washington, who will be asked whether his Government are now prepared to approach the German Government, or whether they would prefer that in their case also, the necessary approach should be made by the International Red Cross.

(4) The Irish proposal was first raised unofficially with the Ministry of Economic Warfare towards the end of 1943. It was suggested that the Irish Red Cross should receive 500 children, preferably from France, who would remain in Eire until the end of the war. After consultation with the United States Government, the British Government informed the Irish authorities that there was no objection to this proposal, and that all necessary facilities regarding transportation from the Continent to Eire would be given. It is understood that the German Government were approached on this matter over three months ago, but that no answer has yet been received. The British Government will ascertain whether the Irish Government are prepared to renew this offer. (In this case the question of additional supplies through the Blockade is unlikely to arise.)

Nothing will be said in public about these evacuation schemes until the various approaches to the German Government, and if necessary to the Quisling Governments concerned, have taken place. Thereafter a reasonable period, say three weeks, will be allowed for the reply. If no reply has then been received, or if it is unfavourable, the facts will receive the utmost publicity.

(5) Thereafter or at the same time an agreed statement will be issued simultaneously in Washington and London setting out the various measures which the two Governments have taken or attempted, to bring relief to persons in enemy-occupied territories. In particular, emphasis will be laid upon the following:

- (a) The abortive scheme for the evacuation of Greek children, when preparations were actually made for the reception in India, Kenya and Tanganyika of at least 25,000 necessitous children from Athens and other Greek cities. This fell through because the consent of the Italian Government could not be obtained.
- (b) The evacuation schemes mentioned above; i.e. to Sweden, Switzerland and Eire.
- (c) The purchase and despatch inside the Blockade Area of food-stuffs from Sweden to Norway, from Switzerland to France and Belgium, from Turkey to Greece, and from Portugal to almost all the occupied territories. It should be emphasised that these consignments have for the most part been paid for by the Allied Governments in London, with funds made available by the British and American Governments.
- (d) The fact that ever since 1940, a special quota of foodstuffs has been despatched to Switzerland over and above the normal Swiss quotas, ear-marked for Polish refugees.
- (e) The fact that when the Danish Jews escaped to Sweden, the two Governments at once communicated with the Swedish Government offering to allow certain additional imports, which would not otherwise have been permitted to pass through the Blockade.
- (f) The fact that medical supplies have never been treated as contraband and have, throughout the war, been permitted to pass through the Blockade.
- (g) The recent decision to admit Vitamin D.

DOCUMENT

446

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Bern
DATED: June 28, 1944
NUMBER: 2198

CONFIDENTIAL

Cable to Minister Harrison and McClelland, Bern, Switzerland,
from Department and War Refugee Board.

Re your 1366, March 6, 2031, April 1, 3877, June 17, and our 1845, May 27, and our 2102, June 19. Discussions here between Dingle M. Foot (MEW), Department, WRB and FEA have resulted in agreement to an experimental program of relief to persons in concentration and refugee camps enemy Europe for distribution by Intercross subject to distribution guarantees. Agreement calls for shipments of 100,000 standard food parcels monthly for three months to Intercross for distribution in such camps to be selected after consultation with Intercross. Agreement reads in part, QUOTE Relief foodstuffs may be despatched through blockade to such camps provided following guarantees are observed: (a) The goods are to be packed suitably for individual distribution; (b) Intercross will undertake to distribute such packages personally by their delegates; (c) Delegates will make subsequent visits to ensure that the goods have been used by those for whom they were intended; (d) reports will be required from Intercross after such consignment and as a condition of further shipments; (e) The distribution will be limited to persons confined in camps. UNQUOTE If the foregoing conditions are observed and we are satisfied that the packages have reached the persons for whom they are intended, the two Governments will be prepared, subject to supply and shipping considerations, to extend the system to other internments camps in enemy Europe.

Question of adding clothing to food consignments will be considered after scheme has become operative with reference to effective supervision and control established these camps by Intercross. Intercross will be asked to report on state of clothing needs in camps to which food will be delivered. In anticipation of conducting an experiment in supply of clothing, arrangements will promptly be made here for procuring the equivalent of 25,000 clothing parcels.

Via airmail Department has asked the Relief Subcommittee of the Joint Blockade Committee to request Intercross immediately to approach German authorities to ascertain whether (a) the German authorities will, in principle, permit Intercross to distribute food parcels and clothing parcels under the condition set forth above in all camps in

German-controlled Europe wherein are confined persons not assimilated to the status of prisoners of war under the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention, (b) the German authorities will permit the immediate distribution of food parcels by Intercross under the conditions set forth above in the following camps:

Auschwitz
Buechenwald
Dachau
Ravensbrueck
Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg
Belsenbergen
Bergau
Birkenau
Sarvar
Theresienstadt
Drancy
Tost or Dost
Dosenorac
Stara Gradiska
Gred Jani-Salis

You are requested to follow this matter closely upon receipt by Intercross of Joint Blockade Committee proposal. Please report date of receipt by Intercross and any developments during period proposal under Intercross consideration. We are extremely interested any suggestion you may wish to make regarding matter.

HULL

DOCUMENT

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 17, 1944
NUMBER: 3877

CONFIDENTIAL

McClelland sends the following for the War Refugee Board.

There follows strictly confidential information that has been secured in reply to the questions in Department's cable dated May 27, No. 1845.

A. Yes; exclusively.

B. Auschwitz, Buechenwald, Dachau, Ravensbrueck and Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg are the principal concentration camps in Germany and German occupied territories to which packages can be sent with satisfactory guarantees of distribution.

ICRC will always be able to supply, for the relief to Jews, the name and location of larger camp, Ghetto or local Jewish Organization undertaking distribution in case of collective shipments of packages. In consultation with WRB representative, ICRC would forward packages only when it can secure the necessary guarantees.

From relatives and friends in Europe, ICRC and other relief organizations are constantly receiving names, addresses and numbers of prisoners, deportees, and political internees, both Jewish and non Jewish, located in a great many smaller camps and places of detention.

At all times ICRC is prepared to present detailed evidence to representatives of the Allied blockade authorities of proper distribution of such packages.

(1) ICRC is in a position to forward roughly 20,000 individual parcels monthly for political prisoners in concentration camps and prisons. However, if French political deportees are included, this number of packages would have to be approximately ten times larger, as there are over 100,000 French deportees according to minimum reliable estimates.

As provision should be made for coming difficult months, a reserve of several hundred thousand parcels containing clothing, shoes and food would not be disproportionate. We recommend that there be included a

few hundred cases of cigarettes as they are absolutely invaluable in facilitating distribution of parcels in Germany and German occupied territories.

(2) Theresienstadt could alone absorb up to 80,000 parcels monthly at the rate of single parcel per person. It is interesting to note in this respect, that ICRC has received written permission from the Germans for one of their delegates to visit Theresienstadt this month.

Including the needs of Croatia, Poland and Hungary, several hundred thousand parcels more per month would be essential should sending of relief for Jews concentrated in that country become possible and necessary.

This proposal is urgent as needs for both Jews and non Jews are increasing each month. Even now European overland transport difficulties may be such as to prevent supplies reaching Switzerland. On the other hand, could such a stockpile be built up in Switzerland, it would be invaluable for saving endangered lives both now and later. It could constitute an advanced UNRRA stock.

Please refer to Legation's message of April 1, No. 2031. The possibilities of purchasing foodstuffs in Europe, let alone clothing, are shrinking rapidly. Any purchases in the Balkans, hitherto the principal remaining source of food suitable for packages, now increasing liable to benefit the enemy directly by giving him foreign exchange.

We cannot too strongly emphasize the desirability of general relief action on behalf of all persecuted and endangered groups irrespective of race, creed or nationality. ICRC is willing to undertake such a general program but restricting help mostly to Jews as hitherto the case insofar as the sending of WRB sponsored funds has been concerned, is liable to jeopardize this whole humanitarian effort. If funds are required, ICRC is informed that various Allied Governments in London and the French Committee of Liberation, Algiers, whose nationals are in Nazi hands, are prepared to contribute to this scheme generously.

(With respect to the British position on this subject, it is pointed out that at the present MEW is allowing sending of packages to unassimilated groups in France in the notorious internment camp of Vernet, Ariège for instance. British position in general, however, has apparently not been favorable).

This Stockpile plan is recommended unequivocally by the Bern representative of WRB and he is convinced of the adequacy of distribution controls which ICRC offers and which are superior to those available for assimilated groups, in many cases.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

448

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Legation, Bern
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: July 18, 1944
NUMBER: 4578

SECRET

The following message is from McClelland for WRB.

An aide-memoire giving reaction of the committee to questions raised in number 2198 from the Department and to those which were contained in news telegrams ARFAR 2197 and 2198 dated June 24 was submitted by ICRC to our British colleagues and ourselves on the 7th of July (please refer to number 3377 of June 17 from the Legation and 430 of July 6 and also to number 2198 dated June 28 from the Department.)

Not to civilian internees assimilated to Geneva Convention does the whole project under consideration refer, but only to deportees and to aid for political prisoners in concentration camps.

The aide-memoire of ICRC follows in substance: It is the conviction of ICRC that an official approach to German authorities asking permission to distribute relief packages generally to unassimilated persons who are confined in camps would not only be refused flatly but would jeopardize the practical results desired in the future as well as those achieved heretofore. There has been a consistent refusal by the authorities of Germany to assimilate such detainees to the status of prisoners of war or civilian internees either by analogy or directly. (During an interview on the 4th of July it was orally stated by an ICRC collaborator that the German reply to a request for the assimilation of such detainees has always been that control over them is an internal affair and that they were considered "criminals.")

In the case of certain concentration camps ICRC is able to assure the delivery of individual packages and to verify regularly that they are received by the prisoners for whom they are intended, in spite of this official attitude of the Germans. In the past ICRC delegates have been able to make unofficial visits to these camps and they have no reason to doubt that in the future they will be able to repeat such visits.

The distribution by a delegate of packages individually and personally in concentration camps is no more possible than it is in prisoner of war camps, for practical reasons. The delegates of ICRC have many possibilities of verifying the fact that in the camps to be specified relief goods are consumed by beneficiaries for whom they are intended.

and are not diverted both by means of visits which will be made regularly on a basis analogous as concerns frequency to those prisoners of war and through controls exercised independently of the visits which have just been mentioned.

ICRC is forced, for these reasons, to request blockade authorities to take into account the realities of the situation and to permit the delegates of the committee the liberty of using control methods available to them which alone allow them to judge whether the distribution of relief goods is carried out satisfactorily, and not to insist on one special form of control or another. ICRC, in assuming the responsibility for such distributions, agrees on the other hand that if any irregularities are brought to its attention regarding the satisfactory reception of relief goods, it will suspend all shipments immediately.

The names of practically all civilian prisoners of certain nationality groups are possessed by ICRC. Although their total number at a given moment is known ICRC has only partial lists for other nationals. Authority is not possessed by ICRC to reveal either the number of names of civilian prisoners in its possession or information regarding the camp's strength which it has been able to obtain through channels which are strictly confidential. However, in proposing to undertake the delivery of a maximum of thirty thousand parcels for concentration camps and thirty-five thousand to Theresienstadt (which can be regarded as a ghetto, not a camp) during the initial month, the approximate number of civilian prisoners to whom it can deliver individual parcels at present is implicitly indicated by the committee. French, Belgian, Dutch, German, Yugoslav, Norwegian and Czech are the principal nationals involved.

The delivery of individual parcels to the following camps in Germany is proposed by ICRC: Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg and Vatzweiler, also Dachau, Ravensweck (women's camp) Buchenwalde Weimar. An examination is being made of the question of similar distributions to camps of Starogradisca, Gredjanisalas and Jasenovac in Croatia. ICRC can visit these camps but if only Jews are to benefit the authorities of Croatia hesitate to allow the distribution of relief. At the present time shipments to camps of Birkenau and Auschwitz in Upper Silesia are not advisable. There will be a further investigation of the situation in Drancy, Compiegne and Belsen. The delegates of ICRC have been able to visit both Drancy and recently Theresienstadt, but no assurance is possessed by the committee that there can be a repetition of such visits.

Reports of distribution of each consignment of parcels will be submitted by ICRC which will also limit the distribution to persons who are confined in camps.

Since a rapid increase in the number of names of political prisoners known is to be expected as soon as the sending of parcels gets under way, the shipment of an initial consignment of one hundred thousand parcels is recommended by the committee although ICRC is at present able to undertake the distribution of only sixty-five thousand parcels for the first month.

The ICRC report ends here.

After consultation with James of Amcross, Geneva, and in view of the present difficulties of transportation, it is suggested that there be used for this relief project for prisoners in concentration camps in Germany, a part of the reclaimable portion of foodstuffs from the cargo of the CHRISTINA (about 65% of 80,000 standard food parcels) which has already arrived in Switzerland. For making up a batch of smaller parcels with these salvaged goods, ICRC is equipped and ready. The decision of blockade authorities is urgent since this food must be consumed within three months.

Only parcels up to a maximum weight of 3 kilos will be accepted for delivery to concentration camps, whether they contain clothing or food, according to information which ICRC has received recently. It is stated by ICRC that if parcels can be shipped for this purpose from overseas to be distributed they must not bear any National Red Cross markings in order that ICRC labels can be affixed by them.

As stated above to me, we have concerted action with the British Legation which has wired a similar summary of the ICRC aide-memoire and the CHRISTINA suggestion.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

449

BAS
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (SECRET 0)

July 31, 1944
RESTRICTED (SC-00)
9 p.m.

AMEMBASSY,
LONDON

6035

From Department, FEA, and WRB for EWD.

We have been informed by the Legation at Bern of the response made by the International Red Cross Committee to the joint approach made on July 4 by American and British representatives in regard to the possible implementation of the section of the Berle-Foot agreement concerning the distribution of food parcels in concentration camps in enemy Europe (reference Embassy's 5003, June 23, Department's 5013, June 24 and Department's air mail instruction 4234, June 26.)

Our information is substantially the same as that conveyed to NEW in Bern's telegram 2865, July 8, copy of which has been received by Department from the British Embassy, Washington. In addition, however, we are informed that Germans will accept for delivery to concentration camps parcels up to a maximum weight of three kilos only whether containing food or clothing. Moreover, parcels must not bear national Red Cross markings although it appears that IRCC can affix its labels to otherwise plain parcels.

It is recognized that the IRCC alternative proposal is substantially the same as the plan they have advanced in the past for effecting delivery of parcels to concentration camps. Obviously, this method is far less satisfactory on economic warfare grounds than the one set forth in the Berle-Foot agreement, in that it offers considerably less definite assurance that the addresses actually will receive and retain the parcels. IRCC, however, claims to have had very good success in obtaining signed receipts and seems to be satisfied that the addresses actually benefit from the parcels for which they sign receipts.

At this juncture, however, we believe that the economic warfare considerations which heretofore have precluded us from making packages available to IRCC for distribution under their plan should largely be waived, in view of the humanitarian and political considerations involved. The amount of food which might fall into enemy hands could not affect the outcome of the war nor prolong it and the desperate situation of the people held in these camps makes it increasingly necessary that an effort be made to give them some

assistance even though we may not have ironclad guarantees of 100 percent receipt by the intended beneficiaries. We propose, therefore, that blockade authorization be granted for the shipment of 300,000 specially prepared three-kilo food parcels to the IRCC for distribution on a trial basis by it under their plan communicated in telegram 2865, July 8, from British Legation, Bern, to NEW. Transportation, of course, presents a serious problem but we would hope that such parcels could be sent via the northern route which we are attempting to establish for the shipment of prisoner of war supplies.

WRB representative at Geneva has inquired whether usable food items from Christina cargo could be turned over to IRCC for packaging by latter into three-kilo parcels and forwarding under above-mentioned plan to individual addresses in camps selected by IRCC. If blockade authorities agree in principle to IRCC plan referred to above, we assume that there would be no objection to the utilization of salvaged Christina cargo as proposed by WRB representative. Urgent action required in view of necessity for early consumption these items in order to avoid loss by spoilage.

Please present this matter to the Relief Sub-Committee as soon as possible and endeavor to obtain a favorable reply.

STETTINIUS

Acting
(JHK)

- 1205 -

DOCUMENT

450

RA-130

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (Secret W)

London

DATED: August 5, 1944
REC'D: 8 a.m., 6th

Secretary of State
Washington
6279, August 5, 7 p.m.

For Department, FEA and WRB.

Relief subcommittee agrees to shipment and distribution of 300,000 specially prepared 3 kilo food parcels to concentration camps as proposed in your telegram 6035, July 31. Only provision made by me was that route of on-shipment from Gothenburg of any parcels sent via Gothenburg must be approved by British. MEW is telegraphing British Embassy on same subject. There is no (repeat no) objection to use of salvaged camp of "Christiana" for this purpose.

WINANT

DOCUMENT

451

DSH-330

This telegram must be para-phrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency.

(SECRET-0)

London

Dated June 10, 1944
Rec'd 6:50 a.m., 11th

Secretary of State,
Washington.

4681, June 10, 9 p.m.

FOR DEPARTMENT AND FEA AND RIEFLER.

One. MEW suggests that salvaged cargo of SS CHRISTINA be distributed in internment camps in south of France if it is agreed to permit distribution of relief goods in these camps. (Reference Department's 4505, June 7.) In this connection EWD has seen recent exchanges of telegrams between British Embassy and MEW indicating that question of supplies for these French camps has been under discussion between Foote and Department. From these telegrams (British Embassy's ARFAR 1148, June 8 and MEW'S 1264, June 9) it appears probable that relief shipments to these camps will be permitted if adequate IRC supervision can be assured. (Camps are those referred to in Embassy's A-376 of March 28).

Two. MEW's reason for suggesting that even undamaged goods be diverted to this use, rather than sent on to Geneva as you suggest, is that even assuming no further deterioration in transportation situation it will take approximately 90 days to clear from Marseilles prisoner of war supplies now in warehouses there.

Three. If proposal to allow relief to these camps is not agreed or if for other reasons this disposition of goods is not considered feasible, MEW wish opportunity to reconsider your proposal before further action is taken.

Four. Embassy would appreciate being informed of decision reached with respect to relief for camps in question.

WINANT

DOCUMENT

452

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMEMBASSY, London
DATED: June 19, 1944
NUMBER: 4829

CONFIDENTIAL

See your 4681, June 10.

In principle we are in agreement to the disposition of the cargo of the Christina as proposed in the reference above. Title to packages of food in the cargo, however, is in the French Committee and the Government of Belgium. Algiers is being requested to ascertain whether the Committee is agreeable to the distribution in the camps in the south of France of the part of the cargo which is salvageable; whether for this use it would be ready to make a donation of such materials to Intercross; should the Committee not be agreeable to making such donation, whether at a value to be ascertained by Intercross the Committee would be agreeable to the sale of such materials.

Concerning the part of the cargo to which the Belgian Government has title, the Belgian representative in New York for prisoner* war relief, du Parc, has in substantially the same sense wired the Government of Belgium in London. Will you indicate to the proper Belgian officials our desire to make arrangements for the prompt disposition of these materials since even that part which is now fit for human consumption may spoil quickly.

The understanding is that du Parc has made the suggestion that the Government of Belgium donate the materials to Intercross with the provision that the Government of Belgium be freed of responsibility regarding costs of salvage. Arrangements will be made by the War Refugee Board for the utilization of materials in French camps and if required for the necessary financing. However, there should be made no commitment along that line. The suggested solution which du Parc has made probably would be agreeable provided that costs of salvage were not in excess of the value of the items which could be used. The Government of Belgium, should that be the case, would be expected to pay the difference between the costs of salvage and the reasonable value as ascertained by Intercross.

HULL

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DOCUMENT

453

RA-648

Bern
Dated November 6, 1944
Rec'd 6:32 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

7365, November 6, 4 p.m.

FOR WEB FROM MCCLELLAND

Legation's 6263, September 21.

ICRC has just submitted most encouraging report on satisfactory distribution of CRISTINA good allotted to parcel program for political prisoners both men and women in German concentration camps. It is worth nothing that this has been very first lot of foodstuffs granted to ICRC for assistance to this category of prisoners. As such it has been invaluable.

During September and October 25,600 parcels weighing total of 54,756 kilos were sent individually addressed to 13,300 detainees and as collective shipments through men of confidence to another 12,300 prisoners. Approximately 8,500 parcels went to French detainees, 4,300 to Belgians, 4,200 to Poles, 3,600 to Norwegians, 2,800 to Dutch and balance to Czechs, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Spaniards and Italians.

International Red Cross delegates were able to visit all camps where parcels were sent and satisfactorily ascertain that great majority packages reached beneficiaries. International Red Cross has been instrumental in getting commanders in certain concentration camps to allow men of confidence for various national groups which has greatly facilitated distribution collective shipments. On the other hand a few camps were encountered where prisoners were not even allowed to return individual receipts.

HARRISON

454



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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

July 25, 1944

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Allen:

Reference is made to our meeting of July 20, 1944. You will recall that I advised you that recent discussions between Mr. Dingle M. Foot, Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Warfare, and representatives of State, Foreign Economic Administration, and War Refugee Board, resulted in an agreement to permit the shipment from this country of 100,000 standard food parcels per month for a three-month period. These packages will be consigned to the International Committee of the Red Cross for distribution exclusively to unassimilated persons in camps in enemy Europe. Distribution, of course, is contingent upon German acquiescence to certain specific guarantees. This proposal has been presented by the American and British missions in Switzerland to the International Committee and we are momentarily awaiting their answer.

Anticipating an affirmative reply from the International Committee, we are desirous of making the necessary advance arrangements. Because most of the persons who will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this distribution are in dire distress, having had little or nothing in the way of relief since the outbreak of war, we are hopeful that the parcels can be packed and shipped promptly. As you may know, we are not an operating agency and have neither the facilities to undertake such a project nor the desire to duplicate existing facilities. It is my understanding that the American National Red Cross will be willing to undertake this packaging and shipping for the Board. Further, it is my understanding that the American National Red Cross will not interpose any objection to our approaching the Bureau of the Budget with a view to the allocation of \$1,125,000 from the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act to cover the cost of packing and shipping these 300,000 food parcels. It will be helpful in our approach to the Bureau of the Budget if you will see fit to confirm these understandings at your earliest possible convenience.

I wish to express my appreciation to you and Mr. Pate for meeting with us the other day and for your helpfulness in the solution of this problem.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Richard F. Allen, Chairman
Insular and Foreign Operations
American National Red Cross
Washington, D. C.

DOCUMENT

455

AMERICAN RED CROSS

C
O
P
Y

Washington 13, D. C.
July 28, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Executive Office of the President
Washington, 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

In answer to your letter of July 25, with reference to the possible assistance which the American Red Cross may be in preparing and shipping 100,000 food parcels per month for a three month period for distribution to unassimilated persons in camps in enemy Europe after the German authorities acquiesce to certain guarantees, providing approximately the same conditions of distribution and supervision by the International Red Cross Committee and their delegates as is the case for bona fide prisoners of war, I assure you the American Red Cross will render such assistance as is possible and consistent with our facilities and our previous obligations.

There have been times during the past year when the demands upon us for prisoner of war packages were very considerably in excess of the facilities of our packaging centres. There have also been times when available shipping space to Europe was considerably less than required to fulfill commitments which we had made to the United States and Allied authorities for the delivery of prisoner of war packages to Geneva. When the German authorities acquiesce in the plan mentioned above we will immediately survey our previous obligations in relation to the facilities in our packaging centres and our shipping space and will make a vigorous effort to act promptly.

With reference to the availability of \$1,125,000 from the Emergency Relief Appropriation this is a matter for decision by the United States Government who will, of course, pass upon the propriety of such use of these funds. The American Red Cross will interpose no objection to such use of the \$1,125,000 amount although it would be a source of great embarrassment to us if amounts in excess of this sum were diverted from the purposes for which these funds have heretofore been used, since we have a natural desire to carry on to completion the relief programs which are well known to the President and the Appropriations Committee of the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

With best wishes to you for success in the important work
which you are carrying on and with assurance of our desire to as-
sist in every proper fashion, I am

Sincerely,

(Signed)
RICHARD F. ALLEN

Richard F. Allen
Vice Chairman

RFA:ps

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C
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 12, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR: War Food Administrator
Secretary of the Treasury
Chairman of the American National Red Cross
Executive Director of the War Refugee Board

On the recommendation of the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board that 285,000 food parcels be procured by this Government for distribution to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps located in that part of Europe now held or occupied by the enemy, the following steps should be taken as expeditiously as possible:

- (1) The unobligated balances of funds allocated to the Department of Agriculture from the appropriations for Foreign War Relief, continued available until June 30, 1945 by the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act, 1944, shall be available to the War Food Administration to procure necessary agricultural supplies up to a value of \$783,750.
- (2) The unobligated balances of the funds allocated to the Treasury Department from the same sources as above, but not in an amount in excess of \$285,000, shall be available to the Secretary of the Treasury to procure the materials, other than agricultural supplies, necessary for the packaging and transportation of the parcels and for reimbursement to the American National Red Cross for the cost of the packaging and transportation of the parcels to the International Committee of the Red Cross.
- (3) As agreed between the American National Red Cross and the War Refugee Board, the Chairman of the American National Red Cross shall arrange for the packaging of the 285,000 food parcels and their shipment to the International Committee of the Red Cross for ultimate distribution among such unassimilated persons.
- (4) The Executive Director of the War Refugee Board shall exercise over-all responsibility for this project.

(Signed) Franklin Roosevelt

DOCUMENT

457

TELEGRAM SENT

ALH

Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement.

SECRET W

December 22, 1944
8 p.m.

ALLEGATION

BERN

4314

The following for McClelland is WRB 332.

Reference your 8044 of December 9 and 8169 of December 16.

The distribution by ICRC of S.S. CHRISTINA cargo and WRB's initial 15,002 parcels is regretted by Department and Board. Exchange of telegrams between us and ICRC in past with respect to distribution has made it evident that ICRC has been reluctant to distribute among potential beneficiaries on racial or religious grounds, and has repeatedly announced its determination to be motivated by need and accessibility. Paragraph 6 your 8044 reiterates this stand QUOTE that relief shipments handled by Committee for unassimilated persons in German-controlled areas be on an impartial basis and not limited to any national, religious, or racial groups. UNQUOTE With this stand Department and Board are in hearty accord. But the argument reported in your 8044 with regard to JDC and World Jewish Congress programs and the proposed distribution scheme of further shipment suggested in your 8169 seem to us to represent departure from the previously stated attitude.

We are certain that the ICRC arguments and their new distribution proposal do not represent your personal views and the Board feels sure that you are in accord with its views. Accordingly, you are requested to advise ICRC that the Board feels strongly that arrangements for the distribution of the 224,328 parcels now enroute to Gothenburg and the 60,672 parcels awaiting shipment to Toulon be made on an equitable basis motivated solely by need and accessibility.

The Board is in agreement with the suggestion contained in your 8169 and hereby authorizes you to arrange for the forwarding of test shipments to Poland under the best obtainable distribution guarantees, but urges that no repeat shipments be forwarded to Poland until reasonable assurance is obtained that supplies from the test shipments have reached intended beneficiaries.

Regarding restricted interpretation of the term QUOTE camps UNQUOTE in your 8044, you are requested to urge ICRC to adopt a

realistic view of the purposes for which the WRB parcel program was inaugurated. It is recommended that, for purposes of WRB's parcel distribution to the unassimilated, the term "camps" be regarded by ICRC as implying all those places where the unassimilated are confined, detained or otherwise forcibly congregated and where some reasonable assurance can be obtained that the parcels will reach intended beneficiaries.

STETTINIUS
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

458

MAN-918

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone other
than a Government agency.
(RESTRICTED)

Bern

Dated December 9, 1944
Rec'd 10:34 p.m.

SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

8044, December 9, 9 a.m.

FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND.

Department's 3927, November 18, WRB's 280.

Salvaged CRISTINA goods were made up into 25,600 parcels distributed to unassimilated persons in following concentration camps:

Buchenwald, 7694 parcels; Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg, 7273; Dachau 3799; Ravensbrueck (Women's camp) 2688; Hamburg-Neuengamme 1277; Natzweiler 1100; Weimar-Schliessfach 685; Mauthausen 520; Bergen-Belsen 378; Feldpost 07702 (indication for camp containing number prominent French political deportees whose location Germans refuse to reveal) 206.

A certain limited number of Jewish internees (it is unfortunately not possible give exact figure) are present in camps of Ravensbrueck (Hungarian women) Mauthausen and Buchenwald. Bergen-Belsen is exclusively Jewish.

I should like to point out that distribution of CRISTINA goods in agreement with ICRC was particularly designed to bring relief to the very large number of non-Jewish (repeat non) political detainees in the vast German concentration camp system. Such non-Jews are treated practically as brutally as the Jews and up to the present exceedingly little has been done to help them. Relief shipments to Jewish deportees in the course of the past year on the other hand have been considerable. The JDC #100,000 contribution to the ICRC, for example, was spent exclusively for Jewish relief as follows: 100,000 Swiss francs (out of total of 429,000) went to Rumania through ICRC delegate in Bucharest for purchase food, clothing and for financial relief to Jewish refugees, especially returning Transnistrian deportees; 100,000 francs to pharmaceutical division of ICRC Joint Relief Commission used to ship medical supplies to Bergen-Belsen Jewish community at Zagreb (including camps in Croatia) Theresienstadt camp of Birkenau in Upper Silesia and "Juedisch Untestuztungsstelle" in Cracow; general government balance of 229,000 francs was also spent by Joint Commission for food (both collective and in parcels) shipments to Cracow (May,

June and July) Theresienstadt (two shipments in July) Budapest (condensed milk for children in June) Birkenau (September) and Bergen-Belsen (November).

Consonant with ICRC's expressed and logical wish that relief shipments handled by Committee for unassimilated persons in German controlled areas be on an impartial basis and not limited to any national, religious or racial groups, I agree with them that CRISTINA goods and first lot of 15023 WRB parcels should go primarily to non-Jews. Our decision regarding the 15023 WRB parcels which are being sent to Dachau, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg, Hamburg-Neuengamme, Mauthausen, Feldpost 07702, and Bergen-Belsen was also influenced by shipment in process of 40,000 World Jewish Congress parcels exclusively to unassimilated Jews principally in Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt.

Future distribution of 224,328 WRB parcels, the news of whose shipment in Department's 4001, November 25 WRB's 291, was most welcome, scheduled to arrive in Gothenburg this month will be carried out as equitably as possible to Jews and non-Jews on basis of degree of need previous relief received and possibility for ICRC to exercise satisfactory control over receipt.

List of camps included in your 3927 has been submitted to ICRC. Preliminary discussions of this list with them (in this respect see Legation's 5971, September 9) reveals that most of these places are not (repeat not) camps properly speaking; are located too near eastern fighting front to be accessible to ICRC and offer very little possibility of adequate control of receipt. ICRC states in this respect that, if FEA and MEW wish to waive distribution control hitherto required of Committee, attempts could be made to send parcels to a larger number of camps containing Jewish deportees.

I will send you shortly a separate message regarding evidence submitted to me by ICRC that food parcels distributed up to now satisfactorily reach intended beneficiaries.

HUDDLE

DOCUMENT

459

SH-1055
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern
Dated January 22, 1945
Rec'd 6:14 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

455, January 22, 1 p.m.

FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND

In view rapid deterioration internal rail transport in Germany I am becoming increasingly concerned about dwindling possibilities of getting our WRB parcels to men and women in German concentration camps.

Germans are progressively more disinclined to make RR freight cars available to ICRC for all parcel services into Germany even that for POWS. Amcross representative Geneva tells me our Army officials plan induce Germans under Geneva Convention supply transport for POW parcels; but we can hope for no such leverage in case of shipments to unassimilated persons for whom Nazis only tolerate parcel distributions. I should therefore like to submit to Boards serious consideration proposition that four or five five to seven ton trucks be made available to me which could in turn be lent to ICRC Division of Special Relief for delivery WRB parcels to accessible camps.

Recently for instance ICRC delegate working out of their headquarters at Uffing near Munich obtained admission to hitherto unvisited and unknown camp of Landsberg-an-Lech in Eastern Bavaria. This camp housed some fifteen thousand internees eighty per cent Jewish deportees. Commander was unusually accommodating and if ICRC man had had any means of transportation or supply of parcels available at Uffing there would have been no difficulty about delivering them personally directly to this camp.

The same applies to Dachau which is just outside Munich.

Situation regarding accessibility all camps particularly Jewish in Vienna area to ICRC is developing most favorably.

SS group there in charge of these camps is headed by an Austrian Nazi named Ebner and includes a German SS named Krumey who is specifically in charge of all Hungarian Jewish deportees in Austria and is man directly responsible for physical delivery of two groups from Bergen Belsen to Switzerland. These two are displaying all signs of willingness to collaborate certainly in any relief activities if not in more interesting work.

This situation was first mentioned in Legation 7575 November 16, 1944 and was discussed at length about two weeks ago with Dr. Tudicum, ICRC delegate in Vienna. If trucks were available this area great deal of good work could be accomplished.

I cite these two examples of Landsberg and Vienna to show that as Germany internally becomes more disorganized transportation breaks down but also camp commanders and isolated SS groups becomes increasingly independent and open to making of valuable local working arrangements.

Availability of trucks to ICRC delegates for actual delivery of parcels to camps has further important advantage of offering far superior control possibilities as to safe reception by intended beneficiaries than obtainable via German railroads when it is frequently most difficult trace freight cars which may be held up for weeks and even months on sidings completely unknown to ICRC as recently occurred in Warnemuende affair.

It may be possible rent buy or otherwise acquire trucks here in Switzerland although Swiss Army is very strict about any transport equipment leaving country. In event trucks could be acquired provision would doubtless have to be made supply fuel and perhaps tires from outside.

I should most welcome expression Board's opinion this proposition as I would conservatively estimate time still available to us for this invaluable work at not more than four to five months.

HUDDLE

- 1220 -

DOCUMENT

460

November 10, 1944

AMERBASSY
LONDON

9419

The cable below for Gallman and Mann is WRB 21.

During the first and second half of November, the balance of War Refugee Board's 300,000 three-kilo food parcels will go forward consigned to Intercross as authorized by the Berle-Foot Agreement.

In view of the extreme urgency of extending additional aid to unassimilated persons in German-controlled concentration camps and the time-consuming aspects in this country of food procurement, packaging and shipping operations, the Department, FEA and WRB recommend the shipment from this country of an additional 300,000 three-kilo food parcels during a three month period beginning December 1944 for consignment to Intercross. This recommendation is endorsed by the Department, FEA and WRB and we jointly request that this matter be referred to the Relief Subcommittee with a view to obtaining Blockade authorization to proceed with this program at the earliest possible date.

STETTINIUS
(ACTING)
GLW

- 1221 -

DOCUMENT

461

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: November 16, 1944
NUMBER: 10022

SECRET

This message is for WRB, the Department and FEA.

As set forth in Department's 9419 of the tenth of November and WRB 21, the Relief Sub-Committee approves shipment of further 300,000 three kilo parcels. In approving consignment, MEW representative, drew attention to the present shortage of transportation to Geneva from Marseilles and stated he presumed that these parcels would be scheduled so that they did not conflict with essential Prisoner of War supplies' onshipment.

GALLMAN

DOCUMENT

462

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 31, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary of the Treasury
Chairman of the American National Red Cross
Executive Director of the War Refugee Board

Since the procurement and shipment of the 285,000 food packages for distribution to victims of enemy persecution in Europe, referred to in my memorandum of September 12, 1944, have been successfully completed, the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board has recommended that an additional 300,000 three-kilo food parcels be procured by this Government for similar distribution to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps located in that part of Europe now held or occupied by the enemy.

In order that this program may be put into effect as rapidly as possible, it is directed that the following steps be taken at once:

(1) The unobligated balances of funds allocated to the Treasury Department from the appropriations for Foreign War Relief, continued available until June 30, 1945, by the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act, 1944, shall be available to the Secretary of the Treasury up to a value of \$1,125,000 to procure commercially these parcels and for reimbursement to the American National Red Cross for the cost of warehousing within the United States and the ultimate transportation of these parcels to the International Committee of the Red Cross. As agreed between Treasury Procurement Division and the War Refugee Board, the Director of Procurement shall arrange for the purchase of these parcels for delivery to the American National Red Cross.

(2) As agreed between the American National Red Cross and the War Refugee Board, the Chairman of the American National Red Cross shall arrange for the warehousing within the United States and shipping of the 300,000 three-kilo food parcels to the International Committee of the Red Cross for ultimate distribution among such unassimilated persons.

(3) The Executive Director of the War Refugee Board shall exercise over-all responsibility for this project.

(Signed) FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

- 1223 -
DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

463



March 15 1945

OF THE
DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Feller:

I wish at this time to express to UNRRA the appreciation of the War Refugee Board for agreeing, as you stated to me on the telephone yesterday, to make food supplies available, at the request of the War Refugee Board, to the International Red Cross for the maintenance in Switzerland of refugees evacuated from Germany and who are in transit to UNRRA-controlled camps.

A representative of the War Refugee Board is about to leave for Switzerland where he will discuss this matter with the Board's representative in Switzerland, Roswell D. McClelland. The Board will advise UNRRA as to the types and quantities of food needed after detailed advice has been received from Switzerland.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. A. H. Feller,
General Counsel,
United Nations Relief and
Rehabilitation Administration,
Washington, D. C.

DOCUMENT

464

SG
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET-W)

March 9, 1945
8 p.m.

AMLEGATION
BERN

998

The following for McClelland from O'Dwyer is WRB 438.

Reference your No. 1217 of February 24, and No. 1345 of March 2, 1945, and Department's No. 819 of February 23, 1945.

1. The Board regards as most urgent that all possible steps be taken at once for the delivery of War Refugee Board food parcels to intended beneficiaries in enemy territory. Accordingly, you are hereby authorized to procure the necessary transportation, including trucking facilities, gasoline, tires, oil, etc., from any source to be made available to the International Red Cross for (a) the delivery of War Refugee Board food packages and (b) for the evacuation of physically unfit detainees from enemy territory to Switzerland. The Board urges haste in this program.

2. The War Department today has cabled General Eisenhower recommending the release of 50 tons of trucking capacity with 1500 to 2000 gallons of gasoline per week and necessary lubricating oil for delivery to the International Red Cross in Switzerland earmarked for War Refugee Board operations. G-4 at Paris has been instructed by the War Department to expect your arrival in Paris and you are hereby directed to proceed to Paris at once to work out necessary details.

3. You should, of course, continue to make every effort to obtain transportation equipment from other sources including Swiss Government and private sources in Switzerland, since ultimate transportation needs may require more than 50 tons of trucking capacity.

For your information, the Swiss Minister in Washington has advised me that he has recommended to his government that adequate trucking facilities be released by the Swiss for this urgent War Refugee Board work.

Use your best judgment in handling complications which may arise. Please keep Board advised of all developments.

GREW
(Acting)

DOCUMENT

465

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WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

30 March 1945

Brigadier General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director, War Refugee Board
Treasury Department
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear General:

I refer to your recent request for the views of the War Department on a proposal that the War Refugee Board purchase 900,000 food parcels from the stock of 7,000,000 food parcels now in Switzerland and intended for use by United Nations prisoners of war in Germany.

This matter has been discussed with the American Red Cross and the following information has been obtained:

a. Only 2,000,000 parcels in the present reserve are owned by this Government, the balance being the property of other Governments of the United Nations whose nationals are prisoners of war in German custody. The United States alone cannot provide the desired 900,000 parcels, as to do so would reduce by almost one-half the reserve available for United States prisoners of war. It would therefore be necessary for the War Refugee Board to negotiate with the other Governments involved, on the basis of trying to obtain the desired number of parcels pro rata out of the total stockpile.

b. The American Red Cross strongly urges that no prisoner of war parcels be distributed to war refugees unless repacked, as distribution outside prisoner of war camps of parcels marked for prisoners of war would destroy the security provided at present against the misuse or diversion of these special parcels. In the opinion of the Personnel Division this position is sound, and it is understood, further, that the War Refugee Board has informally expressed concurrence therein to the Red Cross. Hence the necessity would arise for repacking the 900,000 parcels in Switzerland, and this, it is believed, would be difficult to do. In connection with the above, this Division is informed by the American Red Cross (Mr. Pate) that the Red Cross is in a position to package in its plants in the U.S. 15,000 special refugee food parcels per day, the necessary supplies to be furnished by the War Refugee Board.

The War Department has so far concurred only in the forwarding by the War Refugee Board of specifically packaged "refugee parcels"

to war refugees in concentration camps in Germany. If it is now intended to feed refugees in Germany outside of concentration camps the question of blockade violation is presented. The War Department would appreciate a clarification of the intention of the War Refugee Board in this respect.

Assuming that the food parcels in question will be distributed solely in concentration camps, supervised by International Red Cross Committee in accordance with existing practice, I should like to ask the earnest consideration of the War Refugee Board to the matters set forth above and that the War Refugee Board make every effort, subject to available shipping to provide the desired parcels from sources in the United States.

If the War Refugee Board considers that it must procure these parcels in Switzerland, the War Department will agree to sell its proportionate share of the requested total (i.e., 2/7 or approximately 206,000 parcels), on condition that these parcels be re-packaged before shipment into Germany.

Sincerely,

(Signed)
H. A. GERHARDT

Harrison A. Gerhardt
Colonel, General Staff Corps
Executive to Ass't Secretary of War

- 1227 -
DOCUMENT



C
O
P
Y

466

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 4, 1945

Dear Colonel Gerhardt:

I have received your letter of March 30, 1945, concerning the proposal of the War Refugee Board to purchase food parcels from the stock of allied prisoner of war food packages now in Switzerland.

The Board is firmly convinced that in order to perform its most important function of bringing relief to civilian internees under enemy control it must obtain food now in Switzerland. The Board's efforts to obtain food parcels from sources in the United States have made it clear that even under the best circumstances it would take many months before such food could be prepared for shipment to Europe.

Accordingly, the Board accepts the offer of the War Department to sell the Board 206,000 parcels of this Government's present reserve of prisoner of war packages in Switzerland. The Board will arrange for the repackaging of the parcels before shipment to the refugees in German concentration camps under the supervision of the International Red Cross. You are assured that the Board's feeding program is for refugees in German concentration camps only.

It will be appreciated if you will advise the Board at once as to the cost of the 206,000 parcels and as to the steps to be taken by the Board to obtain title and possession of the parcels in order that appropriate instructions may be forwarded to its representative in Switzerland and to the International Red Cross.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Col. Harrison A. Gerhardt,
Executive to Ass't. Secretary of War,
Room 4E386, Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

- 1228 -

DOCUMENT

467

NIGHT LETTER RATE

American Red Cross

April 18, 1945

AMCNSUL

GENEVA (SWITZERLAND)

161

For Amcross.

QUOTE SW 1226. War Department has sold to War Refugee Board 206,000 POW food parcels now Switzerland intended for AmPOWS. Please authorize Intercross transfer to War Refugee Board representative Switzerland 206,000 POW food parcels from American Reserve for disposition in accordance with following conditions: (1) Such food parcels will be distributed solely in concentration camps in accordance with existing practices supervised by Intercross (2) All such food parcels will be repackaged in containers not bearing any reference to United States Army or to POWS before being introduced into or distributed in Germany. War Department reports this transfer cleared with State Department, Foreign Economic Administration and War Food Administration. Understand McClelland WRB representative in Switzerland is completing arrangements for repackaging in Switzerland.

Amcross UNQUOTE

Richard F. Allen
Vice Chairman
Insular and Foreign Operations

- 1229 -

DOCUMENT

468

MS

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

February 23, 1945
2 p.m.

AMLEGATION
BERN

804

The following for McClelland is WRB 417.

Reference your 1056 of February 16. Please cable whether Schutzhaeftlinge include persons actively engaged in labor for Germany and whether the national groups to which ICRC parcels are to be sent comprise or exclude Jews of the respective nationalities.

GREW
(Acting)

- 1230 -

DOCUMENT

469

ALH-1432
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement
(SECRET W)

Bern
Dated March 2, 1945
Rec'd 5:22 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

1346, March 2, Noon

FOR WRE FROM MCCLELLAND

Department's 804, February 23.

In general it can be said that according to best available information, most "schutz haeflinge" (SH) capable of physical labor are being worked by Nazis at a great variety of tasks more or less directly connected with Germany's war effort. It is impossible however to obtain any statistic on numbers actually engaged in what could be called "war work" (i.e. munition plants or war material factories). A large number of SH are being used literally as "slave labor" performing heavy physical work such as road building debris clearing, digging of anti-tank ditches and like. Many women in Ravensbrueck for instance are engaged in reconditioning used clothing shipped from extermination camps in Poland. Jewish deportees who recently reached Switzerland from the Resienstadt reported having worked at sewing German army uniforms and at making heavy wooden cases for machinery and like. Again at Bergenbelsen some categories of internees work while others do not.

At this time however a great many SH are inactive in terribly crowded assembly camps having been evacuated from previous camps and jobs in east.

In any special relief program for SH undertaken at this moment ICRC plans deliver parcels insofar as practically possible only to ill and exhausted SH.

National groups mentioned in Legation's 1056 February 16, comprise Jews of respective nationalities.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

470

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 22, 1945
NUMBER: 1727

CONFIDENTIAL

US Urgent.

McClelland sends the following for O'Dwyer, WRB, and the Department.

I refer herewith to the Legation's telegrams of March 8 and March 21, Nos. 1481 and 1687 respectively.

It has unfortunately not been possible for me to report sooner on results of recent discussions with German authorities by ICRC President Burckhardt, because of illness.

Buckhardt first met with Kaltenbrunner of SS on March 12 in the Borarlberg region between Swiss border and Innsbruck. A personal letter was sent by Himmler stating that he was prevented by military duties from being present and delegating to Kaltenbrunner full power.

On March 13 conversations were continued in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland, with Kaltenbrunner plus Berber, Director of Foreign Political Institute of Foreign Ministry, and Windecke of German FD, and on March 14 with Berber alone in Zurich. For some months now Berber has been in Switzerland and appears to be one of Ribbentrop's special contact men.

The main concession obtained from SS, as Burckhardt explained the matters, is permission for delegates of ICRC to be stationed in all major camps for both "Schutzhaeftlinge" (SH) and POWS to supervise personally distributions of relief. SS laid down one condition which was that such representatives of ICRC not circulate particularly back and forth to Switzerland but that they remain in these camps until the end of the war. Since certain numbers of SH are being worked in War Industries, this restriction is presumably on the grounds of military security.

On the 21st of March, Burckhardt of ICRC reported to me that the choice of appropriate delegates for these camp posts was being actively pursued by the committee, and they will be despatched as rapidly as possible into Germany.

There is willingness on the part of VG to allow deliveries of relief of all types by truck or other means of transport to SH

irrespective of nationality or race. It was requested by SS that any such relief distribution should be conducted discreetly, especially any relief given to marching columns along the roads, in view of difficulties of food supply situation for the Germans themselves.

With respect to evacuation of SH, final detailed authorization covering specific persons whom ICRC will be permitted to evacuate has not been obtained from Berlin as yet, although the SS agreed in principle to allow the exit of women, children, elderly and ill people irrespective of religion or race. An answer is expected by ICRC by the 26th or 27th of March.

It was suggested by Burckhardt of ICRC that, in view of danger of approaching front, inmates of women's concentration camp of Ravensbrueck be among the first evacuated. This camp is located on the main highway to Neustrelitz approximately 70 kilometers north of Berlin and contains at least 30,000 women of principally Hungarian (Jewish), Polish, Norwegian, Belgian, Czech, Dutch, French, Russian and other nationalities, and it is definitely one of the bad camps.

It was stated by the Germans that transportation for any such evacuations would not be supplied by them. Consequently, it is planned by ICRC to utilize returning POW relief trucks, although this will be a difficult and inadequate method of effecting evacuation, especially persons who are ill.

The use by ICRC for evacuees of parcel ships returning from Luebeck to Goteborg was not favored by the Germans who stated that these waters were thickly mined and that they did not wish to be held responsible for sinking any ships loaded with evacuees.

The possibility of sending sanitary blocked train to Ravensbrueck from Switzerland if and when final authorization for the evacuation of this camp is given by the Germans, is still being discussed with the Swiss authorities by ICRC, although the Swiss are both reluctant to release such transport equipment and doubt that train could get through under the present chaotic state of German railroads which are being constantly bombed.

With respect to the question of evacuation of SH in general an attempt was made by Kaltenbrunner to create the impression that SS had really been only an executive organ throughout the past years of mass arrests and deportation of civilians to Germany from occupied countries and SS would be willing to allow useless SH to leave Germany now that food and housing situation was growing difficult within Germany.

It appears that Burckhardt of ICRC is working on some special scheme for evacuation of French SH who are to be exchanged for German

civilians held by the French (I understand mainly Baltic Germans taken in Alsace region by the French). It is reported that French authorities are prepared to furnish 100 trucks to carry out this plan.

As soon as information regarding identity of first groups of SH whose evacuation will be permitted by the Germans is obtained from ICRC, I will report to WRB promptly.

In summing up, War Refugee Board can contribute to this double relief and evacuation program most effectively by (1) obtaining as many tires and trucks as possible, and (2) organizing and placing into operation mechanism for evacuating from Switzerland such SH groups who may arrive here and who are nonrepatriable in Europe for the time being.

HARRISON

- 1234 -

DOCUMENT

471

MF-1659
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Bern
Dated April 14, 1945
Rec'd 12:12 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

2189, April 14, 11 a.m.

FOR WEB FROM MCCLELLAND

Regarding number of WRB parcels still at Goteborg and number already shipped either to concentration camps or to Luebeck for later delivery to camps, ICRC supplied me on April 11 with following details: (Legation's 1765, March 24).

On March 5, 10800 parcels went to Hamburg-Neuengamme; March 16 ditto; March 17, 9600 parcels to Ravensbrueck; March 17, 13,200 parcels to ICRC depot at Luebeck. Total 44,400.

Original number of parcels at Goteborg was 224,328.

39324 WRB "K" parcels were released to WJC in Sweden. ICRC informs me WJC entrusted these parcels to the "Xperativa Foer Bundet" in Goteborg for shipping.

This leaves some 140,604 WEB parcels still in Goteborg. ICRC has instructed its delegate there to ship these as rapidly as possible to Luebeck for further distribution by Renault trucks now en route.

Repeated to Stockholm for Olsen of WEB.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

472

DB-1205

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (Restricted)

Bern

DATED: May 19, 1945
REC'D: 4:55 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

2823, May 19, 7 p.m.

O'Dwyer WRB from McClelland

Dept's 1763 WRB 521, May 10.

With reference to second paragraph your 521 there are approximately 28,792 undistributed WRB parcels, exclusive of 206,000 still in Switzerland. They are located in ICRC warehouses at Geneva.

Out of original 60,000 WRB parcels shipped to Switzerland, some 31,208 were shipped into German occupied territory for relief of civil detainees or otherwise used for this same category of beneficiaries, through ICRC's Div. of Social Assistance, as follows: 16 March 1170 to Theresienstadt 16 March 4902 to Vienna area 19 March 492 to Theresienstadt 16 April 900 to Mauthausen 17 Apr. 4230 to Theresienstadt 19 Apr. 3660 to concentration camps in Wurtemberg and Bavaria principally Dachau 23 Apr. 8550 to Landsberg-am-Lech 1st May 1500 to temporary ICRC deportee camp at Hoechst 4th May 804 for convoys of rescued detainees incoming from Mauthausen and 11 May 5000 to Bolzano area (Legt's 2552, May 1).

Delivery of 2,000 gallons gasoline and corresponding lubricants allotted weekly by SHAEF to ICRC for WRB programs has been stopped as of May 16.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

473

AdeR-237
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Stockholm
Dated June 8, 1945
Rec'd 6:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2071, June 8, 4 p.m.

The following telegram has been sent to Bern, 35 June 8, 4 p.m.

FOR MCCLELLAND FROM OLSEN.

Supplementing our 33, May 23, following information furnished
by AMROSS representative Whisler. 224,000 WRB food parcels shipped
from Goteborg distributed as follows.

Mar. 5, two wagons to Neuengamme 10800 parcels.

Mar. 15, by SS MAGDELENA 5 to Luebeck for POWS, compensate for
those given Norwegian civilians 13200.

Mar. 16, wagon to Neuengamme 5400.

Mar. 17, same place same amount.

Mar. 17, two wagons to Ravensbrueck 9600.

Mar. 17, by SS MAGDELENA 7 to Luebeck for civilian internees
140376.

May 22, to Kooperative for Bundet for WJC 39288.

Total 224,121 parcels.

Of parcels sent IRC representative Luebeck 53610 on hand at
latest reporting date. He was, however, distributing these rapidly
as possible to camp areas in reach and also using them help feed
10,000 former camp inmates now in Luebeck area. Hence assumable
supply WRB parcels in Luebeck virtually exhausted. Local WJC group
distributed kosher food parcels as follows:

Bergen-Belsen 7500.

Ravensbrueck same amount.

Various camps Germany 10835.

Destined Luebeck but instead sent Denmark 10,000.

To Dane Jews in Sweden 2000.

Total 37,835.

As indicated above parcels intended distribution Luebeck distributed by Dane mosaic community to inmates Ravensbrueck as they passed thru Denmark (*) WRB's 2071. Reports reached us many of these not given food for several days and in critical condition.

JOHNSON

(*) apparent omission.

- 1238 -

DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

474

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 30, 1945

Col. A. E. Howse,
Administrator,
Surplus Property Board,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Colonel Howse:

The War Refugee Board, established under Executive Order No. 9417 of January 22, 1944, is in the process of winding up all of its operations. The Board owns approximately 206,000 standard prisoner of war parcels in Geneva, Switzerland, which it purchased from the United States War Department for distribution to civilian detainees in German concentration camps. These packages could not be distributed before the cessation of hostilities in Europe and are accordingly surplus property of the War Refugee Board.

The Board desires to dispose of these parcels, under Temporary Regulation A of the Surplus Property Board, to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration at basically the same unit cost which the Board paid the War Department. The War Refugee Board will consummate this transaction provided that the Surplus Property Board interposes no objection.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

DOCUMENT

475
SURPLUS PROPERTY BOARD
Washington 25, D.C.

C
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May 30, 1945

Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
The War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

My dear General O'Dwyer:

Reference is made to your letter of May 30, 1945, in which you indicate that the War Refugee Board proposes to dispose of approximately 206,000 food parcels in Geneva, Switzerland, to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration under Temporary Regulation A of the Surplus Property Board provided that the Surplus Property Board interposes no objection.

This is to advise you that the Surplus Property Board interposes no objection to the consummation of this transaction as outlined.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) A. E. Howse
A. E. Howse
Administrator

DOCUMENT

476

RLW
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (Secret 7)

May 10, 1945
6 p.m.

U. S. Urgent
Amlegation
Bern
1763

The following for McClelland from War Refugee Board is WRB 521.

Reference your no. 2550 of May 1, 1945.

The Executive Order establishing the War Refugee Board strictly limits Board's activities to rescue and relief of victims of enemy oppression in enemy-occupied territory. Accordingly, relief and assistance of refugees liberated from the Germans are not (repeat not) within Board's jurisdiction.

In view of foregoing, all shipments of WRB parcels should cease. You are requested to take stock of all WRB parcels still in Switzerland and report figures and location to Board. Instructions concerning disposition of these parcels and other WRB property in Switzerland will follow.

Requests received by you concerning relief and assistance of refugees liberated from the Germans should be referred to UNRRA, the appropriate military authorities, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, private refugee organizations or other national or international groups which are authorized to deal with matters of this nature.

You should begin now to wind up all Board activities in Switzerland and prepare final reports. Board will appreciate knowing how long this will take.

GREW
(Acting)
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

477

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

TO: Amembassy, London
FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 18, 1944
NUMBER: 3953

SECRET

Following for Biefler from War Refugee Board.

It is proposed to approach the five principal neutrals in the manner discussed below concerning the passage through the blockade, subject to appropriate safeguards, of additional clothing and food in amounts sufficient to meet the added burdens on their resources in order to arrange for reception by those countries of larger numbers of adults and children refugees from enemy oppression. Such action is in furtherance of this Government's policy to use all available means consistent with successful prosecution of the war to further the rescue of victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of losing their lives

Switzerland and Sweden. Assurances that every attempt will be made to arrange for importation of whatever additional stocks of clothing and foodstuffs may be needed in those countries to meet requirements of refugees admitted there. This is a renewal of assurances which the United States and British Governments gave previously.

Turkey, Spain and Portugal. Assurances that if these countries adopt a more generous policy concerning the reception and maintenance of refugees, the United States and British Governments would make arrangements to furnish the supplies needed to meet the needs of refugees admitted to those countries.

Please try to obtain the prompt concurrence of the appropriate British authorities to this course of action so that it may be inaugurated with the least possible delay.

HULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

478

The telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (Restricted)

July 3, 1944
8 p.m.

Amlegation,
Bern.
2259

For the Minister.

The Governments of the United States and Great Britain have agreed, in furtherance of their joint policy to use every available means consistent with the successful prosecution of the war to bring about the rescue of victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of death, jointly to approach the Swiss Government in regard to the reception and care of refugees with a view to renewing assurances previously made concerning additional imports, if needed, to meet the needs of refugees admitted to Switzerland.

After concerting with your British colleague, who has received general instructions in the matter, a joint approach should be made to the Swiss Government in the sense of the following:

QUOTE The Governments of the United States and Great Britain desire again to express their admiration for the humanitarian policy which has been followed by the Government of Switzerland in giving asylum and care to the large numbers of refugees who have made their way to Switzerland.

The Governments of the United States and Great Britain desire to reaffirm their willingness to arrange for the provision of such additional imports as may be required to ease the burden on Swiss resources resulting from the temporary care of refugees already received in Switzerland or those who may subsequently be received under the liberal and humanitarian Swiss policy in this regard. UNQUOTE

A similar joint approach is being made to the Government of Sweden. Joint approaches also are being made to the Governments of Turkey, Spain, and Portugal expressing the hope that they will adopt a more liberal policy as regards the reception and temporary care of refugees and offering to arrange for the provision of such additional imports and funds as may be required to ease the burden on local resources arising from the care of such refugees as may be received.

HULL
(GLW)

- 1243 -

DOCUMENT

479

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: July 20, 1944
NUMBER: 5729

SECRET

With reference to message of July 4 from the Department, Number 5269, on June 19th the Embassy received a letter from the Foreign Office which is as follows, in paraphrase: We have received your letter of July 7th with reference to providing additional supplies to meet the needs of refugees in certain neutral countries.

We have approached the five neutral governments mentioned and our representatives have been directed to act in concert with their American colleagues in this matter.

WINANT

DOCUMENT

480

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: February 9, 1944
NUMBER: 437

CONFIDENTIAL

The following cable for the Minister from the War Refugee Board.

You are requested to transmit the following urgent message to International Red Cross, Geneva, Switzerland:

You are herewith referred to our recent cable requesting information concerning possible relief operations for Jews and other persecuted groups. We have examined your proposal made to Intergovernmental Committee in December through your London Delegation in which you requested that 300,000 Swiss francs be placed at your disposal to enable you to carry out the indicated relief program in Rumania, Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia and Theresienstadt, and such other relief actions as may become feasible. The necessary funds for this project are being made available to you immediately by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and the Treasury Department has issued a license authorizing the Joint Distribution Committee to transmit to you the Swiss franc equivalent of \$100,000 for this purpose. You are authorized by the license to use the funds for the purchase of food and other supplies in neutral countries and in Rumania and Hungary and otherwise to carry out the above mentioned relief activities. You are requested to keep the War Refugee Board fully informed of the action which you take, as well as to indicate to the Board what other assistance is needed to carry out this and similar operations.

It is requested that you fully cooperate with the International Red Cross and with representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee in this matter. You should transmit a copy of the above message promptly to Saly Mayer, in St. Gall, Switzerland, who is the Joint Distribution Committee representative.

HULL

DOCUMENT

481

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 4, 1944
NUMBER: 1334

CONFIDENTIAL

A letter dated February 29 has been since submitted by the International Committee of the Red Cross furnishing information requested in the Department's telegram no. 279, and detailing its proposed expenditures of the Swiss franc equivalent of \$100,000 (429,000 Swiss francs) received from joint. (See Department's telegram of January 27, no. 279 and of February 9, no. 437 and Legation's telegram of February 18, no. 1028). Intercross proposes to expend this sum as follows: (A) Transnistria and Bessarabia: 100,000 francs to put at disposition of Intercross delegate in Rumania, in cooperation with Rumanian Red Cross, to purchase and distribute to Jewish refugees clothing available in Rumania. (B) The Reisenstadt: two alternative proposals for expenditures for food parcels of 119,000 francs. (A) 9500 food parcels to be prepared in free port Geneva from materials purchased in Hungary; 84400 francs to be spent for materials in Hungary and 34600 for labor, packing, freight, et cetera, in Switzerland; or (B) 900,000 food parcels containing materials of Swiss, Slovakian, or Hungarian origin; 89000 francs to be spent in Switzerland, 30,000 in Hungary and Slovakia. Intercross states that the execution of the first plan is dependent upon receiving authorization from National Bank for expenditures in Hungary and the second dependent upon bank and (Swiss?) export licenses. (C) Cracow: shipment of pharmaceutical products to Jews there has recently been authorized by German authorities. Intercross would dispatch 12000 kilos of vitamin fortified milk lactissa costing 93000 francs; overhead 7000 francs. (D) Jews in camps in Holland and Upper Silesia: 40000 francs to be spent for 2700 food parcels of Hungarian origin, 1350 parcels for each destination; 29500 francs to be spent in Hungary and the balance in Switzerland. This is again subject to the National Bank's authorizations. (E) 70000 francs to be spent for Swiss and foreign pharmaceutical products and Swiss surgical dressings to be distributed 26000 to Judi Scheunter Stiftung Stell P Cracow, 12000 to Transnistria, 7700 to Theresienstadt, 6700 as emergency reserve, and 12000 for Holland and Upper Silesia. A total of 5300 francs of these drugs are of foreign origin (insulin, merchurochrome, perhepar and aextrosum), the balance Swiss.

2. Before discussing the details of the above plan with Saly Mayer, Intercross inquiries were made of War Refugee Board as to whether it has discretionary authority subject to advice from Mayer

or whether he has final word on the use of funds which the joint supplies.

3. Intercross Lester warns strongly against exploitation of relief action for propaganda purposes by interested groups stating that publicity would likely result in the withdrawing of channels for relief which are now open.

4. A separate telegram will follow containing a summary of Intercross reply to questions raised in Department's telegram No. 279.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

482

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 6, 1944
NUMBER: 1366

SECRET

Reference is made herein to the Department's 279, January 27; and 437, February 9; and the Legation's cable of March 4, no. 1334.

In addition to detailing the proposed expenditures of funds donated by the joint groups, the International Committee Red Cross letter dated February 29, includes following information requested by WRB in the Department's telegrams under reference: (a) - general possibilities and proposals for relief of Jewish refugees and other persecuted groups; (b) - proposals for relief for prisoners from occupied countries in German concentration camps; (c) - plan for relief of children of war victims in Serbia and Slovenia.

1. It is stated by the Intercross that they are almost certain relief consignments would reach their destinations to Rumania, the Resienstadt and Judische Unterstutzung Stelle, Cracow; about consignments to Westerbork, Holland and camps in France and upper Silesia they are uncertain, but the Intercross proposes certain proportion of sums put at its disposal be devoted to test shipments through channels hitherto untried.

2. It is stated by the Intercross that it will endeavor to keep to the lowest possible minimum any purchases made in Hungary or Rumania and will try to procure goods as much as possible in neutral countries. Inquiry is made by the Intercross whether it can count on additional funds on condition that they be expended exclusively in neutral countries within limited available possibilities.

3. In order to avoid expenditures in enemy territory the Intercross proposes (Intercross apprehensive of dangers of enemy abuse entailed by expenditures of foreign exchange in enemy territory) that stocks of relief materials be shipped from overseas for deposit in Geneva which could be drawn upon as opportunities arise for despatch to relief centers. Opportunities for relief are often of short duration and cannot be anticipated with certain types without necessity of fresh appeals on each occasion and a reserve depot would permit immediate action. It is suggested by the Intercross that the depot be under control of War Refugee Board representatives. Warm clothing, underwear, and men's large size boots are the articles most urgently required in

Transnistria. Suggest several thousand parcels each containing assortment of clothing, underwear, pair of strong boots parcels to be made up separately for men, women and children (not infants). It is suggested by the Intercross that the depot contain several tens of thousands relief food parcels of overseas origin not weighing over 2 1/2 kilos and containing non-perishable articles including canned goods, sugar, condensed milk, ovaltine, etc. The Intercross is prepared to transport against reimbursement via Red Cross ships sailing from the United States and Canada to Lisbon and Marseilles, if the question of tonnage presents difficulties.

4. It is stated by the Intercross that cooperation among the various Jewish relief groups seems impossible and observes not in interest of aim in view that it be revealed to one Jewish relief organization what the other organizations are doing. That relief plans be kept strictly secret is urgently requested.

5. Stressing the importance of the relief program to include oppressed groups "irrespective of race or religion", the Intercross expresses gratification that this principle was willingly agreed to by the War Refugee Board. It is believed by the Intercross that a broad relief program assisting various groups is less likely to arouse enemy opposition than one which is confined exclusively to the assistance of Jewish refugees only. Intercross proposes as being relief Allied nationals in German concentration camps and children in Yugoslavia (see B and C below).

B-1. The Intercross proposes, in accordance with A-5 above, that if funds are made available immediately tension relief to Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians, Poles, Greeks, Czechs and other Allied Nationals enduring privation in concentration camps and prisons in Germany under severe secret police control (Intercross through informal channels has obtained names of nearly all Norwegians, Dutch and large numbers of Poles detained in German concentration camps and prisons and urgently requests this fact be kept strictly secret) Intercross states organized relief has up to present been prevented by the British blockade authorities, who insisted as condition that Germans recognize these prisoners as prisoners of war and subject to convention of Geneva.

According to a statement of Intercross it has made successful test shipments of individual relief parcels to these prisoners which were personally acknowledged by the recipients and in several camps Intercross delegates were able to verify on the spot that shipments reached the person intended to receive them. The Intercross is prepared to submit evidence of success of these operations and proposes as start food parcels be made available immediately to men and women in camps and prisons in Germany for 1,450 Norwegians, 1000 Dutch men and women and 1000 Polish. Risks of benefiting the enemy are far less than if

free exchange expended in enemy territory for relief in Transnistria.

1. Two groups of children in Yugoslavia present a particularly alarming situation, according to statement of Intercross. 80,000 children evacuated from Croatia to Belgrade and other Serbian towns are a particularly critical problem as they are undernourished, in need of clothing and health conditions are pitiful. The same applies to where conditions which were already bad during the Italian occupation have now become increasingly serious since last summer and 100,000 children are suffering from malnutrition as a result of complete lack of fortifying foods such as milk, sugar, ovaltine and chocolate.

2. It has been suggested by the Intercross that in order to alleviate this situation the War Refugee Board assign 220,000 francs, of which 200,000 for food and 20,000 for medical relief to be divided equally between children in Slovenia and Serbia. For the purchase of Slovakian sugar and Hungarian alimentary pastes about 45,000 francs would be used and balance of 200,000 francs less 17,000 for administration, transportation, et cetera for purchase of Swiss food products. To prepare Swiss pharmaceutical products and surgical dressings would use about 20,000 francs. It is proposed by the Intercross that these relief goods be shipped to Intercross delegate at Belgrade for distribution in cooperation with the Serbian Red Cross.

If desired the Legation can telegraph further details regarding the above proposals. Copy of letter is being sent by IRO through its own facilities and we will also endeavor to forward a copy.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

483

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: March 20, 1944
NUMBER: 916

CONFIDENTIAL

Given below is the substance of a message which you are requested to please deliver to Intercross, Geneva, from War Refugee Board, referring to your cable of March 4, No. 1334.

The following concerns the equivalent of \$100,000 in Swiss francs received from the Joint Distribution Committee which was referred to in your letter of February 29, 1944, addressed to the United States Legation at Bern: Joint has informed the War Refugee Board that full discretion in respect to the use of the funds under reference has been placed in the Intercross, but Joint hopes that the Intercross will, after consulting with Saly Mayer, coordinate the proposals set forth in February 29 letter with the feeding program being carried out in Turkey at present and with the work which is being done by Saly Mayer. Joint assures the Intercross that no exploitation for propaganda purposes will be made of this relief action.

HULL
(GLW)

DOCUMENT

484

THE PRESIDENT'S WAR RELIEF CONTROL BOARD
WASHINGTON

**C
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February 12, 1944

Attention: Mr. Lawrence Lesser

Dear Mr. Pehle:

As agreed in our conversation yesterday we are referring to you for consideration the request of United Czechoslovak Relief for clearance of a project involving \$150,000 to be expended on a special labor relief project for Czechoslovakia in 1944 and a similar request relating to a \$200,000 Norwegian project through American Relief for Norway, Inc. These two projects are outlined in the attached copies of a letter from United Czechoslovak Relief dated December 20, 1943 and a letter from Norwegian Relief, Inc. (now known as American Relief for Norway) dated January 20, 1944.

As further indication of the nature of these projects we are also enclosing a copy of a letter dated January 13, 1944 from Mr. Abraham Bluestein, Executive Director of the Labor League for Human Rights United Nations Relief (A. F. of L.) and a letter dated January 26, 1944 from Mr. Siegmund Jeremias of the Division of Foreign Relief and International Relations of the National CIO War Relief Committee. As indicated in this correspondence these two organizations have sponsored projects to be operated through various relief agencies participating in the National War Fund which involve approximately \$1,000,000 during 1944. As in the case of the two present requests the funds for these projects will actually be handled through agencies such as United Czechoslovak Relief and American Relief for Norway under plans worked out in collaboration with the labor groups.

As we indicated yesterday these two proposals were referred to the Department of State through Mr. Kuppingen and more recently to the Treasury Department through Mr. O'Flaherty. We understand that the Department of State has already referred the matter to the American Embassy in London. We are asking them to transmit to you and to us any pertinent information that results from their inquiry.

Clearance by this Board is necessary before United Czechoslovak Relief or American Relief for Norway can actually expend funds on these projects and before the National War Fund can advance money to those organizations for that purpose. The Board is prepared to give such clearance immediately upon receipt of notice from the War

Refugee Board that the projects can be carried out under their authorization and, as required by the Executive Order establishing the President's War Relief Control Board, in conformity with foreign policies as determined by the Secretary of State.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
CHARLES P. TAFT

Charles P. Taft
Acting Chairman

Enclos. Omitted - Ed. 2

DOCUMENT

485

No. 2042

Tangier, Morocco, April 10, 1944

Subject: Food Packages for Jews

The Honorable
The Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegram Nos. 38 of March 30, 10 p.m., and 43 of April 6, 3 p.m., and to the Legation's reply No. 79 of April 10, 1944, regarding the sending by Mrs. Renee Reichmann, of Tangier, of food parcels to certain Jews in central and eastern Europe.

Mrs. Reichmann was requested to come in to the Legation to outline her plans. It appears that Rabbi Kalmanowitz and Mr. Kleg have misinterpreted the letter under reference in the Department's telegram No. 38. They telegraphed:

"Greenwald received your letter which outlined the possibility of sending parcels of food to Jews in ghettos. We guarantee payment up to \$3,000. All ghettos in Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and wherever else possible should receive parcels at once."

The Legation was dubious about the present possibilities of being able to despatch food parcels from Tangier to ghettos in Lithuania and Poland, with any assurance whatsoever that they would arrive at their proper destination. Mrs. Reichmann has explained that this was not the suggestion she had offered. For some months she has been sending 500-gram food packages to relatives and friends in two internment camps located in Czechoslovakia, Theresienstadt and Birkenau. The recipients are allowed to send form slips acknowledging the receipt of these packages, and Mrs. Reichmann brought with her to the Legation a number of these slips from Theresienstadt notifying her of the safe arrival of the food packages. She had no such slips from Birkenau, which does not permit them, but she informed the Legation that she has definite knowledge that the Birkenau packages also are being received safely there. She stated that in these two internment camps there are more than 2,000 Jews without private resources or without friends to assist them in supplementing the insufficient camp rations.

The Legation has discussed Mrs. Reichmann's plan with Mr. Mordecai Kessler, a representative of the American Joint Distribution Committee, at present in Tangier. He reports that Mrs. Reichmann and her group are favorably known in the local Jewish community. He also feels that the form receipts constitute an adequate assurance that bona fide

internees do, in fact, receive the food shipments. He said that the Joint Distribution Committee in Lisbon is already sending some food parcels to Theresienstadt, but that Mrs. Reichmann's present list of 100 names has been checked with the Lisbon list of recipients to avoid any duplications. The Jewish community of Bratislava has undertaken to furnish Mrs. Reichmann with the balance of the names of the 2,000 destitute Jews in the two internment camps and this list, in turn, will be checked against the Lisbon list to prevent any overlapping.

The 500-gram food parcels are sent from Tangier through the Spanish Post Office and have taken as short a time as eight days in transit. Bulkier packages are delayed as long as two or three months. It would, therefore, seem advantageous to continue sending the small packages. The internees are allowed to receive two kilos per month, or one package each week. So far, the local Spanish authorities have raised no objection to the export of foodstuffs from Tangier in the small packages under reference. However, if the plan is greatly extended, as is now envisaged, there may be some difficulty. It is hoped, none-the-less, that through the good offices of the Spanish Red Cross, through which it was recently possible to send small, supplementary packages of matzoth free of postage charges to those internees, it will prove possible to overcome any obstacles of an official nature. In the last instance, should the Spanish place an embargo on all food parcel shipments, the money can readily be transferred to Portugal whence it is still possible to send such packages though at much greater cost.

There appears to be no way in which parcels can be sent at present from Tangier to Lithuania, Poland, or Hungary.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
C. BURKE ELBRICK

C. Burke Elbrick
Chargeé d'Affairs ad interim

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PWG:gp

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington

March 4, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I apologize for my erroneous statement Thursday about the letter from the War Relief Control Board to the President. I was very glad to hear of the progress made that afternoon on the jurisdictional question. I assume it is being settled.

Meanwhile, Mr. Thorold, of the British Embassy, called on me and at my suggestion put his inquiry in writing. I enclose a copy of his letter, together with a copy of my reply.

I presented the matter to the Policy Committee on Wednesday morning. As a result, I am instructed to urge you to communicate at once with the British and to acquaint them fully with the situation. This is an important matter of economic warfare in which the two governments have been collaborating in the closest possible way. Nothing should be permitted to injure this relationship, and future programs should be worked out with this Department, Mr. Stone of Foreign Economic Administration, and Mr. Thorold, in their economic warfare aspects. Mr. Warren, of course, can secure the views of Mr. Merchant, our economic warfare man.

I might add that Mr. Thorold apparently had a copy of the license to the World Jewish Congress, and assumed that \$100,000 was the total authorized. I told him the sum was in excess of \$250,000, but gave no further information.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
CHARLES P. TAFT

Charles P. Taft
Director, Office of
Wartime Economic Affairs

Enclosures:

cc Mr. Thorold's letter 2/29

cc Mr. Taft's letter

The Honorable
J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director
War Refugee Board

[Enclosure No. 1 to letter
from Wartime Economic Affairs.]

W.T. 532/FG/16/44

BRITISH EMBASSY
Washington, D.C.

February 29th, 1944

Dear Mr. Taft:

As I informed you during our conversation this morning, the Ministry of Economic Warfare have telegraphed us to enquire regarding the information recently given by the United States Embassy in London to the Intergovernmental Committee, to the effect that the U. S. Government has agreed to license the transfer of \$100,000 to the International Red Cross for the purchase of supplies in Hungary and Roumania to be dispatched to Jews in enemy territory.

I should like in the first place to emphasise that there is no intention on the part of the British Government to place obstacles in the way of relief measures on behalf of the Jews in enemy territory; any such measures have their full sympathy. But the Ministry of Economic Warfare are concerned lest the enemy should derive financial advantage and in particular they are most anxious that no action should be taken which might constitute a breach in agreements which have been reached safeguarding the possible provision to the enemy of foreign exchange, at least until full consultation has taken place between the British and American Governments. Preliminary examination of this matter took place at the end of last year when certain proposals were put forward by the U. S. Treasury in connection with a proposed transfer of \$25,000 in connection with plans for the evacuation of Jews from Roumania and France. These proposals were considered in London and, as stated in Sir Ronald Campbell's letter to Mr. Breckinridge Long of January 8th, 1944, it was felt that there need be no insuperable objections to the financial side of the transaction, though there were certain difficulties against which it was considered suitable safeguards should be provided. We have not had an opportunity of discussing the question of these safeguards with you in greater detail, but in the meanwhile it would appear from the telegram referred to in the beginning of this letter, that the scope of the proposals has been very widely increased, and that they now involve not only much larger sums, but also purchases of supplies in enemy territory by the International Red Cross which were not included in the original proposals as we understood them.

However this may be and apart from the merits of the transactions in question, I am sure you will agree that the financial

side of the proposals is a subject which requires careful joint consideration by the two Governments, more particularly in view of the precedents which may be created by any modification of rules which have hitherto governed financial measures of this nature. I should therefore be very grateful if you would look into this matter, and let me have particulars of the transactions involved, for transmission to my Government.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Stone of Foreign Economic Administration.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)
G. F. THOROLD

Mr. Chas. Taft,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure No. 2 to letter
from Wartime Economic Affairs.]

March 4, 1944

My dear Mr. Thorold:

I have received your letter of February 29, and have sent a copy of it to Mr. J. W. Pehle, Acting Director of the War Refugee Board, with the urgent request that he acquaint you with the existing situation, and clear future transactions with you in their economic warfare aspects.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
CHARLES P. TAFT

Charles P. Taft
Director, Office of
Wartime Economic Affairs.

Mr. G. F. Thorold,
British Embassy.

WEA:CPT:DHJ

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 16, 1944

Dear Mr. Stettinius:

I have received Mr. Taft's letter of March 4, 1944, enclosing copies of a letter from Mr. Thorold of the British Embassy and of Mr. Taft's reply.

As requested by Mr. Taft, I have informed Mr. Thorold of the various specific projects approved by the Board and which are now under way, after appropriate licensing by the Treasury Department with the approval of the State Department. I have asked him to urge his government actively to cooperate in the concrete measures which we are taking. As you know, a detailed report of the activities of the War Refugee Board is being prepared for despatch to Ambassador Winant for the information of the British Foreign Office.

In view of Mr. Taft's comments, it appears to me that he may not be familiar with the background of the licensing problems involved in these rescue operations. The World Jewish Congress, which first presented to this Government a proposal for the rescue and relief of people in the occupied territories, did not obtain the necessary license until five months after the proposal was presented. This delay was due in part to the objections which had been raised by the British and finally on December 17, 1943, after detailed memoranda on the delays were presented by the Treasury to the State Department, after several conferences between the Secretaries of State and Treasury and after receipt of a cable from London stating the British position, the State Department itself issued the necessary license to the World Jewish Congress.

Following this, the Treasury Department, with the approval of the State Department, and without clearance with the British, issued licenses to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada to permit these organizations to carry on relief and evacuation operations in enemy-occupied territory from Switzerland. The World Jewish Congress license was amended so that the terms would be identical to the license issued to the two other organizations.

Since the creation of the War Refugee Board, the projects of several other private organizations in this country have been called to its attention and the Board has approved the issuance of the

necessary licenses by the Treasury Department. Bearing in mind the determined policy of this Government to save these people and the task which has been given the War Refugee Board by the President, the Board will continue to approve and sponsor projects designed to save lives. It seems clear that in cases of this kind the humanitarian considerations are paramount.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J.W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Honorable Edward R. Stettinius,
Under Secretary of State.

DOCUMENT

488

BRITISH EMBASSY AIDE MEMOIRE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT DATED
MARCH 27, 1947

AIDE MEMOIRE

The War Cabinet Committee on Refugees has had under consideration the question of the licensing of remittances to Switzerland to be used in operations on behalf of Jews in enemy occupied Europe. The Committee is much concerned that licences are now being issued for transactions which, by making dollars or Swiss francs available in enemy countries, may be directly harmful to the successful prosecution of the war.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom wish to emphasise that in protesting against the issue of such licences they are in no way inspired by any lack of sympathy with the aims of the War Refugee Board whose creation they have welcomed and with whom they have stated their determination to cooperate; they are only anxious that help should be given to the refugees in a form which will not aid the enemy.

His Majesty's Government understand that the transactions permissible under the licences now being issued fall generally into three categories:

(a) Purchases from residents in Switzerland of French francs or other occupied countries' currencies where it can be shown that such currency has been held since before the war or subsequently acquired in a "legitimate" manner.

(b) Acquisition of French francs or other occupied countries' currencies as a "credit" against dollars to be paid over after the war.

(c) Use of dollars or other "hard" currency in the occupied countries themselves where this is deemed necessary in order to secure necessary assistance for the Jewish refugees.

His Majesty's Government see no objection to method (a) above, but they consider that method (b) is so far superior from the blockade point of view to that outlined under (c) that they consider we should aim at its extension as far as possible. Already much has been done by way of credits; it is understood that those provided by Mr. Mayer, a leading Swiss Jew, and backed by Joint Distribution Committee, already amount to eight million dollars. The memoranda submitted by the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee to the British and United States Governments, show that much more local currency could be obtained in many of the countries concerned, if more backing were available for payment after the war. (This

does not apply to Poland where such credit does not operate, but for which other schemes are under consideration with the Polish Government.)

His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that in their view the use of dollars or other hard currency on a scale sufficient to be of any real use would be an embarrassment to the organisations concerned, since on that scale it would be likely to disrupt the credit scheme. Those who up to now have accepted credit would be encouraged to demand cash; it is presumed that the United States Government would agree that there can be no question of allowing cash to be remitted to occupied Europe on the scale of operations which appear to be practicable.

His Majesty's Government wish therefore, after consideration of the Inter-Governmental Committee memoranda mentioned above, to propose the following scheme:- The charitable organisations who have set aside sums for credit schemes of the kind envisaged will doubtless continue to do so; but more can be spent than can be raised from those sources. His Majesty's Government propose accordingly that we should supplement these schemes, and those which are already being run by exiled governments, by setting up a guarantee fund in the hands of the Inter-Governmental Committee, to which His Majesty's Government and the United States Government would contribute in equal shares under their normal arrangements for covering the Committee's operational expenses. It is possible that other governments represented on the Inter-Governmental Committee may wish to contribute, but most of those principally concerned are already running their own schemes.

It is suggested that receipts for goods and services supplied to refugees should be made out to lenders in enemy territory and deposited in a Swiss bank for redemption after the war, and that lenders should be verbally informed. These receipts should be guaranteed by the fund in question. Details should be worked out between our two Governments and the Inter-Governmental Committee.

No final estimation can be given of the amount which could be effectively used in this way, but on the basis of such information as His Majesty's Government have, they propose to ask Parliament to vote whatever sums may be necessary for this purpose up to one and a half million pounds, provided the United States Government will contribute a like sum. The contribution which His Majesty's Government would make to this credit would be part of their share of the Inter-Governmental Committee's operational expenses.

His Majesty's Government believe that the advantage of the above proposal lies in the fact that it would not only avoid the risk of bringing benefit to the enemy, but would extend the possibility of benefiting persons whose relief and safety is a cause both Governments have equally at heart. Cooperation with the War

Refugee Board so far as His Majesty's Missions abroad are concerned has already started, and His Majesty's Government are anxious that there should be the same complete cooperation at the centre; otherwise, there will be confusion and competition between different interests, and above all, the licensing of remittances, once begun, may become of such dimensions and so get out of control that substantial advantage to the enemy would be the result. As this would affect our common interest, His Majesty's Government hope that the United States Government will agree on the necessity of maintaining existing agreements for common action in all these matters of economic warfare.

BRITISH EMBASSY,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 27th, 1944.

STATE DEPARTMENT AIDE MEMOIRE TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY, UNDATED

MEMORANDUM

Reference is made to the British Embassy's Aide Memoire, of March 27, 1944, concerning the question of supplying funds in Switzerland to be used for the rescue and relief of victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

This Aide Memoire raises two important matters, which can be most satisfactorily dealt with by treating them separately. These matters are:

(1) The participation of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in the rescue and relief of victims of enemy oppression through the establishment of a guarantee fund such as that referred to in the Aide Memoire.

(2) The policies to be followed by the two Governments in permitting private organizations in their respective countries to finance operations in and communicate with enemy territory in an effort to save the lives of oppressed peoples in enemy territory.

As the British Government is aware, representatives of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, Sir Herbert Emerson and Patrick Malin, came to Washington in early April for general discussions with the War Refugee Board concerning refugee problems. These discussions were most cordial and complete agreement was reached on working arrangements between the Committee and the Board. It is assumed that the Intergovernmental Committee has already informed the British Government of the decisions which were made. During these discussions the contents of the Aide Memoire were fully considered. There follows a brief summary of the action which this Government has now taken toward implementing the proposal to set up a guarantee fund in the hands of the Intergovernmental Committee.

There also follows a discussion of the second question raised in the Aide Memoire, namely the policies to be followed by the two Governments with respect to the activities of private organizations. It should be emphasized that it was fully understood by the Intergovernmental Committee that this second question was one which should be discussed between the two Governments independently of the Intergovernmental Committee.

I. The credit scheme submitted by the Intergovernmental Committee to the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Aide Memoire stated that the British Government proposed to ask Parliament to vote whatever sums might be necessary, up to £1,500,000, to implement the credit scheme of the Intergovernmental Committee, provided that the Government of the United States was prepared to provide the same amount. In discussions with representatives of the Intergovernmental Committee it developed that in terms of the immediate proportions of the proposed operations the sum still owing to the Intergovernmental Committee by the two Governments in fulfillment of commitments for 1944, namely £900,000 (\$3,600,000) would be adequate for the time being. Accordingly, the Intergovernmental Committee submitted the following basic proposal to the United States Government:

"The IGC has provided in its estimate of operational expenditure for 1944 the sum of one million pounds, of which one half will be furnished by the American government and one half by the British government. It has been agreed by the two governments that if this expenditure is exceeded, the IGC, under the agreed procedure, may submit proposals for supplementary grants. At present the IGC has not in prospect operational expenditure of any considerable amount. It could therefore allocate £900,000, namely \$3,600,000 for the purpose of credit operations provided it is clearly understood that if and when the necessity of undertaking other projects arises it will be free, in accordance with the approved procedure, to submit applications to the two governments for further grants. Such applications might include requests for further grants towards credit operations if they exceeded £900,000 from the budget grant and could be usefully extended beyond this figure.

"It is therefore proposed that, on the above understanding, the credit operations should be financed in the first place to the extent of £900,000 out of the budget grant of £1,000,000."

The United States has now paid to the Intergovernmental Committee the sum of \$1,800,000 and if the needs of the Committee require further sums in the future sympathetic consideration will be given at that time to making the necessary additional funds available.

II. The policies to be followed in issuing licenses to private organizations for the relief and rescue of victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of death.

With respect to this matter, the Intergovernmental Committee has taken the following position:

"It is proposed that (1) financial assistance by the IGC should be limited to credit operations; (2) that cash operations should continue to be financed by the voluntary

organizations through licenses issued by the governments of the U.K. and U.S.A., respectively, according as the organizations are British or American, and that any question of policy which may arise between the two governments regarding the issue of such licenses should be discussed between the two governments, independent of the IGC."

The United States Government also regards the arrangement with the Intergovernmental Committee as completely independent of the question of the policies to be adopted by the respective governments in licensing private organizations to engage in rescue and relief activities.

The United States Government, with the approval of the Department of State, the Treasury Department, and the War Refugee Board, has issued a number of licenses to private organizations authorizing such organizations to finance operations in and communicate with enemy territory in an effort to save the lives of oppressed peoples. The British Government has already been advised of the basic provisions of these licenses. As the British Government knows, such licenses permit the acquisition of the necessary local funds, goods or services from persons in enemy or enemy occupied territory against payment in free exchange or free currency notes only if it is not feasible to obtain the local funds by the other methods which are prescribed.

The United States Government has concluded, in issuing these licenses, that any danger involved in permitting the enemy to acquire relatively insubstantial quantities of foreign exchange is far outweighed by the saving of lives. Experience has shown that the use of money is in many cases the only means by which refugees can be assisted to escape or otherwise save their lives, and it is felt that every effort should be made to see that adequate funds are available for this purpose.

The United States Government is convinced of the need for operations of this character, in addition to those to be undertaken by the Intergovernmental Committee in extension of credit operations hitherto conducted by private organizations.

The United States Government, motivated by humanitarian considerations, intends to continue to follow the policy which it has been pursuing now for several months in connection with the issuance of licenses to private organizations. It is most anxious that its efforts in this regard should not be unilateral, and that the two governments will be able to follow a common line so that there may be full cooperation in this matter as well as in the case of operations through the Intergovernmental Committee.

Accordingly, the United States Government hopes that the British Government will decide to adopt a similar policy in connection with authorizing and encouraging the sending of funds by private organ-

izations to neutral countries for the relief and rescue of victims of enemy oppression. In this way, the two governments will be able most effectively to carry out the policy heretofore agreed upon to take all possible measures, consistent with the successful prosecution of the war, for the speedy rescue and relief of the oppressed minorities of Europe.

Department of State,

Washington.

DOCUMENT

490

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

October 10, 1944
Midnight

AMEMBASSY
LONDON

8341

The cable below for Winant from Department and Pehle of War
Refugee Board is WRB 8.

Reference Pehle's message forwarded as Department's No. 6809
of August 25, 1944. After discussion with Arthur Goodhart, Pehle
and Goodhart agree that best arrangement will be for Goodhart to
be available for special consultation and advice on an informal
basis, and not be designated as War Refugee Board representative.

Accordingly, the Board proposes to appoint Mr. James H. Mann
as Special Representative of the Board in England with the designation
by the Department as Special Attaché to the Embassy on war
refugee matters. The President's Order of January 22, 1944, pro-
vides that the State Department shall appoint such Special Attachés
on the recommendation of the Board, that they shall have diplomatic
status, and that their duties and responsibilities shall be defined
by the Board in consultation with the State Department.

If the appointment meets with your approval, you should ad-
vise Mr. Mann that he is so designated and that he is to have dip-
lomatic status. It is assumed that there will be no objection on
the part of the British Government to this designation, although
you may in your discretion approach the British authorities in-
formally if you consider it necessary or advisable to do so.
Please confirm action by telegram.

Please request Mann to contact Goodhart as soon as he returns
to England and to consult freely with Goodhart on War Refugee Board
problems as they arise.

HULL

DOCUMENT

491

SECRET

FROM: London
DATED: October 4, 1944
REC'D: October 12, 5 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
A-1211, October 4, 1944.

Reference Embassy's 7860, September 22 and 3145 September 29. Following is the report of the Special Committee on Relief setting forth its recommendations concerning the relaxation of present blockade policy with respect to relief shipments to occupied territory:

"RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT ANGLO AMERICAN RELIEF
COMMITTEE 3rd OCTOBER 1944

NORWAY

1. (1) The United States and British Governments will permit compensating imports into Sweden to replace foodstuffs sent as relief to Norway (as far as supply considerations permit) and will allow the onshipment to Norway of foodstuffs imported through the Allied controls. They will also relax the rule forbidding the export from Sweden to Norway of products similaires. These relaxations in blockade policy will be made to enable an increase in the extent of relief feeding in Norway both as regards numbers of beneficiaries and variety of diet.

- (a) In schools,
- (b) In canteens for aged people,
- (c) In organized community centers or under special schemes approved by the Joint Standing Commission in Stockholm.

(ii) They will also permit children's clothing to be sent in small lots provided that the despatch of each consignment will be contingent upon receipt of satisfactory reports on the distribution of previous consignments.

(iii) All proposed shipments, both of food and clothing, will be submitted to the Joint Standing Commission in Stockholm as constituted under the Anglo-American Swedish War Trade Agreement of 1943. The United States and British members of the Commission will be given wide discretion to approve consignments and will only refer to Washington and London,

(a) in cases of doubt, and

(b) for goods other than those specified above.

(iv) Reports on distribution will be submitted to the Joint Standing Commission, Stockholm.

2. The Norwegian Government will be informed of these proposals and consulted as to the form and extent of relief to be provided. They will be asked to submit proposals for the finance of these operations.

3. The Swedish Government will be asked to submit estimates of the additional relief assistance that can be provided through the existing machinery and the approximate quantities of additional imports required through our controls.

4. The German Government will be asked for,

(a) safe conducts for all transport carrying relief supplies, complete freedom of movement and guarantees of personal safety for supervisory personnel;

(b) assurance that rations will be maintained and that imports to Norway from German Europe will be maintained at a rate, not less than that prevailing at the corresponding period of the previous year;

(c) an assurance that the distribution of relief supplies will be permitted in any part of Norway selected by the approved neutral organisations, after consultation with the Joint Standing Commission;

(d) release from the Baltic and safe conducts for any additional tonnage required. (The United States and British Governments will be prepared to give the same assurances as now given in the case of Swedish ships in the Greek Relief Service.)

POLAND

5. (i) The International Red Cross Committee will be informed that the United States and British Governments are willing to admit

through their controls food for distributions:

(a) in selected cities where the International Red Cross Committee report urgent need and where distribution can be made by them or through their agents in canteens, schools or other community centres; all food will be consumed in these centres;

(b) in other areas by means of food parcels sent to individuals or groups of individuals provided the International Red Cross Committee can obtain verification that the parcels are received and retained by the intended beneficiaries.

(ii) The United States and British Governments will also permit children's clothing to be sent in small lots provided that the despatch of each consignment will be contingent upon the receipt of satisfactory reports on the distribution of previous consignments.

6. The Polish Government will be informed of these proposals and consulted both as to the form and the extent of the relief to be provided; they will be asked to submit proposals for the finance of those operations.

7. The International Red Cross Committee will be asked,

(a) to submit names of cities where need is acute and estimates of the quantities of food that they can distribute in both bulk and parcel form, and

(b) to indicate the extent and form of control which they can exercise in each case.

8. The German Government will be asked by the International Red Cross Committee for,

(a) safe conducts for all transport carrying relief supplies, freedom of movement and guarantees of personal safety, for supervisory personnel,

(b) assurances that rations will be maintained and that no reduction will be made in normal supplies to the area concerned.

(c) assurance that distribution of relief supplies will be permitted in any cities and any parts of such cities selected by the International Red Cross Committee.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND DENMARK

9. Although it is not thought that there is acute need for relief in Czechoslovakia and Denmark, the Czech Government and Danish Council will be consulted and if it appears that need in any particular areas has become urgent, action similar to that proposed for Poland will be authorized.

OTHER AREAS

10. In view of the present military situation it is not thought necessary to make recommendations for the Netherlands and for Yugoslavia. Should however these countries or any part of them remain under settled enemy occupation during the winter, similar action to that proposed for Poland will be authorized.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

11. The policy of the United States and British Governments with regard to concentration and internment camps and Jews in ghettos will be the same as in recent months, namely that the International Red Cross Committee will be permitted to despatch relief foodstuffs to any such camp or ghetto where it is satisfied as to the conditions of distribution.

12. The United States and British Governments have been in communication with the International Red Cross Committee regarding the possibility of the safe distribution of clothing in such camps and if adequate assurances are received, they will be prepared to permit experimental consignments of children's clothing.

VITAMINS

13. Arrangements have already been made to despatch vitamin D to occupied territories in the same way as medical supplies.

It is now proposed to add vitamins B and C.

MONETARY RELIEF

14. It is suggested that licenses which involve or may involve the placing of funds in neutral territory at the disposal of enemy persons should only be issued after consultation between the United States and British Governments. Normally such consultation should take place between the State Department and the British Embassy in Washington, who would be given a wide discretion to agree to their issue, reference to the Relief sub-committee in London only being

necessary in doubtful cases.

(Note: The American representatives on the Committee reserved their position on paragraph 14 and the United States Ambassador is referring the matter separately to his Government)."

WINANT

DOCUMENT

492

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Embassy, Moscow
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 9, 1944
NUMBER: 775

SECRET

The following message refers to circular telegram dated January 26, 1944, 7 p.m., from the Department.

There are no private or public agencies in Russia which are active in bringing war refugees into the country so far as the Embassy can find out. The enormous refugee problem of taking care of the millions of Soviet citizens whom the German invasion displaced is the one with which Russia is essentially concerned.

The relief of the Jews and the Poles whom the Government of the U.S.S.R. sent to Siberia and Central Asia from the portion of eastern Poland which the Russian forces occupied in 1940 is another of their problems. The breaking of diplomatic relations between Poland and Russia has complicated this problem. The Australian Legation which represents Polish interests in the U.S.S.R. has been able to secure exit visas for only a very few although many of the persons mentioned above would like to get out of Russia.

Steps to repatriate Russian war refugees from North Africa were taken by the Government of the U.S.S.R. you may remember.

The only immigrants who are likely to receive a welcome here during the period of the war at least, would be persons with a Communist background and entrance into the country in all probability would be desired by very few others.

I do not believe it would be advisable under these circumstances to approach the Government of the U.S.S.R. on this subject unless in developing our own specific plan of action we find that for its execution we need the cooperation of Russia.

HARRIMAN

DOCUMENT

493

TELEGRAM SENT

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (BR)

March 11, 1944

7 p.m.

Amembassy
Moscow
554

For the Ambassador from the War Refugee Board.

Our circular airgram of January 26 described the functions of the War Refugee Board, composed of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War. This Board has been established by the President to take action for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jewish people of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution.

The Board is actively engaged in carrying out the policy of this Government as announced by the President, and is seeking the cooperation of all members of the United Nations in this tremendous task.

The Board is fully conscious of the great work which the Soviet Government has done to date in saving the lives of untold numbers of refugees, including Jews, from Hitler who were rescued in the midst of battle from the jaws of the German army. At the same time the Board is convinced that if it could secure the cooperation of the Soviet Government in some of the projects on which this Government is working, the chances of saving many people from death would be greatly increased. In view of the outstanding record of the Soviet Government in this whole matter we are not suggesting that pressure be put on them to do more than they are now doing. We feel, however, that if the Soviet Government can be convinced of the fact that we are sincerely determined to do what we can to prevent the murder of the Jews and other persecuted peoples by Hitler, they may be prepared to cooperate in some of the programs which we have under consideration.

There are many ways in which the Soviet Government might be of assistance in connection with these programs. The representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey, Ira Hirschmann, at the suggestion of Ambassador Steinhardt, has already discussed two specific problems with Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov in Turkey. Vinogradov was informed of our intention to exert pressure on Bulgaria and other satellite countries and was requested to take parallel action. Vinogradov was also informed of our efforts to get the Turkish Government to give permission for the use of a ship for evacuating refugees and was asked to support our request. Although Vinogradov agreed to speak to the Bulgarian Minister informally, he pointed out that on both of these matters he could not act formally except through Moscow.

Vinogradov suggested that you should request the assistance of his Government on these two problems and he agreed to do likewise.

We feel that it is very important that you discuss this whole matter with the Soviet Government immediately. You should make clear the policy of this Government and discuss frankly the problems with which we are faced.

The following information concerning some of the things we are working on and some of the obstacles we have encountered is furnished for your information and use in connection with your discussions with the Soviet Government:

The War Refugee Board is convinced that it is of utmost importance to undertake at once an organized and concentrated effort to make clear, by all appropriate means, to all Axis satellites that the Allied Governments view in a most serious light their assistance in any form to Hitler's program to exterminate the Jews, and other similar groups, regarding all such action as criminal participation in organized murder. The Board also believes it necessary to make clear to the satellites by all possible means, its intention to do everything in its power to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of death, in order not only to give the satellites a clear view of the attitude of this country in the matter, but also of the opportunities which exist for assisting in the execution of our policy. The Board feels very strongly that a campaign of this kind must be made through all possible channels and be constantly repeated at every available opportunity. The Board believes that parallel action on the part of other Allied Governments would do a great deal to assure the success of this endeavor. At the moment it is important that pressure be brought to bear particularly on Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, because in those areas there are many refugees in imminent danger of death who can be evacuated to Turkey and other places if those Governments permit it.

In addition to bringing pressure to bear through various channels on the governments of the satellite countries, the Board feels that there should be employed in this campaign all available means for effecting the widest dissemination of our attitude not only to the governments themselves but to the largest number possible of the people of satellite countries. In this connection the Office of War Information is cooperating with the War Refugee Board in bringing home to the people in Germany and the satellite countries the fact that we consider this matter to be of paramount importance and intend vigorously to pursue all possible means of accomplishing our objective.

This cable has been repeated to Ambassador Steinhardt at Ankara.

HULL

DOCUMENT

494

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amembassy, Moscow
RATED: March 11, 1944, 7 p.m.
NUMBER: 555

CONFIDENTIAL

War Refugee Board sends the following for the Ambassador's attention.

The following message immediately follows the Department's previous cable on the subject dated March 11.

In addition to the proposed plan designed to effect a change in the attitude as well as the actions of our enemies, the Board is convinced that there is an opportunity for actually moving many of these refugees out of enemy controlled areas. The Board believes that in the localities close to Turkey and the Black Sea there exists one of the most promising opportunities for actually accomplishing the rescue of such people. It is known that there are considerable numbers of refugees in Rumania, Bulgaria and Transnistria. It seems possible that arrangements can be made with the Turkish Government to receive refugees from these localities. Furthermore it appears possible that the Rumanian Government will grant to a substantial number of these persons permission to leave Rumania. The need for immediate means of transportation is imperative.

The Board is trying to arrange for a small Turkish vessel to proceed to Constanza in order to evacuate about 1,000 children from Constanza to Turkey. The Board's representative in Turkey has reported that if we would offer a guaranty to the Turkish Government that the ship would be replaced if it were lost there might be a possibility of chartering the S. S. Vatan, a small Turkish ship. Our Government promptly offered such a guaranty. It is hoped the Russian Government may be of some assistance in our negotiations with the Government of Turkey. Also the possibility of using Swedish ships for this purpose is the subject of negotiations between this Government and the Government of Sweden. During the discussions with the Soviet Government you are requested to keep in mind that this problem of transportation seems to be the key to evacuation in the Black Sea Area.

One of the functions of the Board is the finding of places of temporary havens of refuge to which persons now in enemy dominated European countries may be moved. The cooperation of the Governments of Spain and Turkey depends upon our ability to move refugees coming into those countries to other places as quickly as possible.

Preparations have been made to move refugees now in Spain to a camp which has been established in North Africa in order to facilitate the entry of additional refugees into Spain.

Refugees are entering Palestine by the way of Turkey. The Government of Turkey has been requested to relax its border and other controls and in other ways increase the flow of refugees from occupied territories through Turkey. The Board is offering to finance the establishment of reception camps to accommodate refugees entering Turkey and the Board would arrange for their transportation to other places as quickly as possible.

It seems to the Board that it would be necessary to find at least temporary places of refuge in a number of places if the evacuation of a substantial number of refugees can be effected as is planned. It appears from negotiations with the Swiss Government that Switzerland will now accept refugee children if a guarantee can be given that they will be removed after the war. We are making every effort to provide Switzerland with assurances which will meet her requirements.

It would greatly increase the possibility of evacuating large numbers of refugees if the Soviet Government were prepared immediately to take refugees, Jews and non-Jews, who manage to reach neutral countries from enemy controlled territories and who could be given at least a temporary refuge in the Soviet Union after being transported across the Black Sea from the Balkan countries. If the Soviet Government would give assurances that she would take refugees from those countries after the end of the war, Switzerland and other countries might possibly give more favorable consideration to taking refugees now. You should make every attempt in your negotiations with the Soviets to obtain their complete cooperation if it seems that they would be willing to accept such refugees even on a temporary basis.

From the foregoing, particularly taking into consideration the time and physical factor to be contended with, you can understand that a number of the obstacles which we are encountering could be solved with the Soviet Government's aid. If you will give personal and prompt attention to this matter it will be greatly appreciated.

The foregoing message has been repeated to Ankara for Ambassador Steinhardt.

HULL

DOCUMENT

495

BE-530
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Ankara
Dated August 24, 1944
Rec'd 6:14 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

1553, August 24, 2 p.m.

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR PEHLE WRB FROM HIRSCHMANN ANKARA NO. 140

The written reply received from the Apostolic Delegate Istanbul indicates in summary that the assistance which the delegate can afford in matters relating to Hungary all his time is limited to the extension of facilities mainly in the nature of courier service. (REEMBS 1438, August 7.) Principal aid thus far has been the transmission to the Apostolic Nuncio in Budapest of several thousand Palestine immigration certificates authorized by the Jewish Agency for Jews in Hungary. The Apostolic Delegate is without independent information on the present situation of Hungarian Jews. The reply further indicates that matters in which the assistance of the Catholic Church is to be enlisted should be taken up with the Cardinal Secretary of State at the Vatican.

It is reported by persons arriving from Hungary who recently passed through Istanbul that the deportation of Jews from Hungary has ceased for the present, but that with the exception of those in Budapest few Jews remain in Hungary. We are attempting to verify the above information.

KELLEY

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D. C.

No. 581/42

January 5, 1945.

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director, War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

In a telegram of December 26, 1944, the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of United States and Canada and the Vaad Hahatzala Emergency Committee again appealed to the Holy See through this office to intercede that the extermination of Hungarian Jewry might cease.

I am now in receipt of a communication from the Holy See assuring me that it has never interrupted its intense activity in behalf of Hungarian Jews. The Apostolic Nunciature of Budapest and the Hungarian Bishops have constantly lent themselves to this work with every resource and effort possible. Recently too the Holy Father assigned a conspicuous sum of money to the Apostolic Nunciature as a further gift for the alleviating of the sufferings of these Jews.

I am informed that as of this date it is no longer possible for the Holy See to correspond with Budapest, but that also the Apostolic Nunciature in Berlin has been directed to concern itself with this matter.

With sentiments of esteem, and every good wish, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGNANI

Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

DOCUMENT

497

LFG-261
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

Ankara
Dated August 12, 1944
Rec'd 1 a.m., 13th

Secretary of State
Washington

1478, August 12, 2 p.m.

FOR PEHLE WRB FROM HIRSCHMANN

Ankara's 131

For your information following was received by me in Istanbul
from an authentic source.

The Catholic Church in Hungary has taken an active part in
rescuing many Hungarian Jewish citizens by means of technical de-
vice on conversion of Jews to Christianity. Nazis have attempted
in numerous ways to oppose these measures to which the church and
especially the Dominicans, who have been most sympathetic, responded
they have authority to baptize immediately any person who is in
imminent danger of death. During air raids hundreds of Jews are
baptized in air raid shelters. When religious classes for Jews
were held in churches, groups of Hungarian Nazis entered and broke
up the classes which resulted in most of the baptism now taking
place in the shelters. It is reported that in the past month more
Jews have been converted to Christianity than during the last 15
years.

KELLEY

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

498

February 7, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

As the proposed appropriation request of the Department in the amount of \$5,000,000 to cover this Government's share of the estimated administrative and operational expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee has been held in abeyance, which means it cannot be made a part of the deficiency appropriation of the Department which will go to Congress this week, I feel you will want to have for the consideration of the Board the complete details on this matter which are contained in the attached writeup. In addition, I enclose a copy of a despatch indicating that 50,000 pounds of the portion for administrative expenses is desired by the Intergovernmental Committee in February.

It is our feeling, to avoid any possible misunderstanding and possible consequent weakening of the status of the Intergovernmental Committee, that this payment should be made in February without fail. I presume, therefore, that the Board will wish to consider promptly appropriating funds for this purpose out of funds available to the Board. We should appreciate hearing from you on this as soon as possible as there is some urgency to the matter in view of the February payment.

With best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.

Encs. [(Omitted)]

Mr. John W. Pehle,
Acting Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D.C.

499

DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 26, 1944

My dear Mr. Stettinius:

This is in response to your letter of February 7 concerning funds for the Intergovernmental Committee.

I understand that this Government is committed to supplying the Intergovernmental Committee with £51,998 (including £1,998 for administrative expenses for the period September 1, 1943, to December 31, 1943, and £50,000 for operational expenses for the first quarter of 1944) and that in order "to avoid any possible misunderstanding and possible consequent weakening of the status of the Intergovernmental Committee" it is very desirable that this payment be forthcoming before the end of February.

On the basis of this understanding I am in agreement that the payment of £51,998 should be made from the War Refugee Board's allotment from the President's Emergency Fund and a transfer of funds in this amount is being arranged at once.

I assume that all projects financed from the operation expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee, which are submitted to this Government for approval, will be undertaken only after clearance with the War Refugee Board. In addition it is my suggestion that the Intergovernmental Committee be advised that the current payment is being made from War Refugee Board funds.

It should be clearly understood that this payment implies no commitment that War Refugee Board funds will be available for this purpose after the present quarter. Any subsequent requests will be reviewed in the light of the use of the funds presently being transferred and the prospects for effective use in the future.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

Honorable Edward R. Stettinius
Under Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

At the suggestion of Myron Taylor, Sir Herbert Emerson and Patrick Malin of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees came to Washington in early April for discussions with the War Refugee Board. These discussions were most cordial and complete agreement has been reached on working relations between the Committee and the Board.

The question of financing the activities of the Intergovernmental Committee was discussed and the following recommendations are submitted for your approval:

(1) Some time ago this Government committed \$2,000,000 to the operational budget of the Intergovernmental Committee, and the British Government made a like commitment. The War Refugee Board has already advanced \$200,000 to the Committee against this commitment - this advance came out of the funds made available to the Board from the President's Emergency Fund. It is proposed that the balance due the Intergovernmental Committee be set aside now, to be paid over to the Committee as its programs require (the Committee needs \$500,000 at once).

Accordingly, we request that there be made available immediately to the War Refugee Board \$2,000,000 out of the President's Emergency Fund. \$500,000 of this sum will be paid over to the Intergovernmental Committee at once; \$200,000 will be used to reimburse the War Refugee Board for the advance previously made; and the remainder will be paid to the Committee as requested by it.

There is attached a proposed allocation letter transferring the \$2,000,000 to the War Refugee Board.

(2) In addition, the British Government has indicated that it proposes to ask Parliament to vote further sums, up to a total of \$6,000,000, as may be necessary to carry out a proposed credit operation by the Intergovernmental Committee, provided the United States Government will contribute like amounts.

Until the \$2,000,000 referred to in paragraph (1) is substantially exhausted, we do not feel that it is necessary to set aside any further funds at this time for the operations of the Intergovernmental Committee. If you approve, we propose to advise the British

Government that if the needs of the Committee require such further sums in the future, sympathetic consideration will be given at that time to making the necessary funds available.

CORDELL HULL
Secretary of State.

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.
Secretary of the Treasury

Attachment.

(Signed)
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

HENRY L. STIMSON
Secretary of War.

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Allocation No. 44-80

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MAY 15 1944

My dear Mr. Secretary:

By virtue of the authority vested in me by law I hereby allocate from the appropriation entitled "Emergency Fund for the President, National Defense, 1942-1944,"

To	Amount
War Refugee Board	\$2,000,000

to be expended by said Board in connection with emergencies affecting the national security and defense for carrying out the functions of the Board as prescribed by Executive Order 9417 of January 22, 1944.

This allocation is additional to the allocation made by letter of January 29, 1944 (44-58) for the same purpose and shall be consolidated with said allocation and be available for the same objects of expenditure and under the same conditions.

Please arrange for the necessary transfer of funds and advise the War Refugee Board accordingly.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The Honorable

The Secretary of the Treasury

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502

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
WRB

November 11, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Reference is made to my letter of February 7, 1944, and your reply of February 26, 1944, with respect to the contribution of this Government toward the administrative expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in London. The American Embassy in London has advised the Department of State of the request of the Finance Officer of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees for payment of the remaining half of the United States share of the administrative expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee for the period 1 September 1943 to 31 December 1944. In connection with this payment your attention is called to despatch 13250 from the American Embassy London of January 12, 1944, which stated that the contribution of this Government toward the administrative expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee for the period amounted to 3,996 pounds.

In your letter of February 7, 1944, you authorized payment of one half this amount, 1,998 pounds, in addition to 50,000 pounds toward the operational expenses of the Committee and at the same time transmitted to the London Embassy \$209,811.93 to cover both payments.

Payment of the balance of this Government's contribution toward the administrative expenses of the Committee for the period 1 September 1943 to 31 December 1944 in the amount of 1,998 pounds is now due and requested by the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees. In accordance with existing arrangements, the Department respectfully requests the payment of this balance by the War Refugee Board through facilities of the Department.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.

Acting Secretary

Mr. John W. Pehle,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

- 1288 -

DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

November 15, 1944

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My dear Mr. Stettinius:

Pursuant to your letter of November 11, I have today arranged for the transfer of the \$1,998 from the War Refugee Board's allotment from the President's Emergency Fund to the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees through the facilities of the Department of State in London.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.
Under Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

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MEMORANDUM

504

April 14, 1944

TO: Mr. John Pehle, Executive Director,
War Refugee Board

FROM: Sir Herbert Emerson, Director
Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees

SUBJECT: The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees and its
Working Relations with the War Refugee Board.

The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees was formed as a result of the conference which was convened, on the initiative of President Roosevelt, at Evian, in July 1938. Its membership prior to August 1943 consisted of the following twenty-eight governments: Argentine Republic, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The persons coming within the early mandate of the Committee were those Germans, Austrians and Sudetenlanders who had not yet left their countries but who were being forced to emigrate on account of their political opinions, religious beliefs or racial origin, and those who had already left but who had not yet established themselves permanently elsewhere. The main purpose of the committee at the time of its establishment was to arrange, by discussion with the German authorities, an orderly system of migration; this involved the finding of permanent homes for many refugees, and the member governments made valuable contributions in this respect. They also assumed the liability of financing the meetings of the committee and its administrative expenditure, but did not assume any obligations for the financing of involuntary emigration.

During the four years following the outbreak of war, the activities of the committee were restricted by war conditions, the limited nature of its mandate, and the lack of financial resources. But in August 1943 the executive committee - consisting of the governments of the Argentine Republic, Brazil, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, and the French Committee of National Liberation - met to consider certain suggestions made by the United Kingdom and United States as a result of the discussions which took place between the delegates of their governments at Bermuda in the preceding April. The recommendations adopted by the executive committee involved a great expansion of the committee's membership, scope, functions and finances.

Twenty-one additional governments were invited to join the committee; Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Iran, Iraq, Luxembourg, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Salvador, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and Yugoslavia. Affirmative replies have so far been received from Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Iceland, India, Luxembourg, Poland, South Africa, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - bringing the present membership of the Committee to thirty-six. During this period when acceptances of newly invited members and ratifications of previous members are being received, the executive committee has been operating on the basis of the expanded mandate.

That mandate now includes, as may be found necessary and practicable, in addition to those previously covered, those persons, wherever they may be, who, as a result of events in Europe, have had to leave, or may have to leave, their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties on account of their race, religion or political beliefs. With regard to persons coming within the expanded mandate, the executive committee is empowered to undertake negotiations with neutral or Allied States or organizations, and to take such steps as may be necessary to preserve, maintain and transport the refugees. For the purposes enumerated above, the executive committee is empowered to receive and disburse both public and private funds.

Administrative expenses are shared by all member governments. With regard to operational expenditure, the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States have agreed, subject to legislative consent, to underwrite it jointly on the conditions, first, that all projects which come within this offer shall be considered individually, and the two governments consulted before a project is sanctioned or expenditure incurred thereon; and, second, that when a clearer idea has been obtained of the money required for the efficient conduct of the committee's work under its new commitments, an invitation shall be addressed to all the member governments inviting them to contribute to this expenditure also, in accordance with their abilities and their interest in the humanitarian work of the committee.

This humanitarian work falls into three classes (1) Measures relating to persecuted persons still within the territory of Germany and her European allies or territory occupied or controlled by them - measures for their rescue or escape from such areas, and measures for their preservation within such areas. These measures will be necessary for persons in each such area until the threat of persecution is ended - i.e., until Allied victory is achieved in a particular area or for the whole of Europe. (2) Prearmistice measures relating to persecuted persons who may have escaped or been rescued from such areas, or may yet escape or be rescued - measures for their physical relief (food, clothing, shelter,

medical service), transport, employment, welfare, etc. These measures will be necessary, in neutral or liberated or conquered areas, until the allies are victorious over the whole or a considerable portion of Europe. (3) Post-armistice measures - measures for interim relief, for repatriation, and for permanent resettlement of those who cannot be repatriated.

Under the authority of the executive committee the director's office has been at work on all three types of measures since last August. The Assistant Director has visited Switzerland at the invitation of the Swiss Government, stopping in Spain and Portugal on the way; and the Vice Director has visited French North Africa, Italy, Egypt, Palestine and Turkey. Our resident representative for Italy, attached to the headquarters of the Allied Control Commission, has already begun his activities; our resident representative for French North Africa will begin work in a few days; and it is anticipated that a third representative will soon be installed in Cairo to cooperate in the Middle Eastern work of UNRRA. As a comprehensive agreement with UNRRA as to respective responsibilities is far advanced - the principle being that UNRRA, wherever and whenever it operates, will handle physical relief and initial mass repatriation, and that the Intergovernmental Committee will handle the non-relief needs of the displaced people who cannot be repatriated with reasonable speed. A plenary session of the Intergovernmental Committee is scheduled for the early summer.

According to Executive Order 9417, dated January 22, 1944, establishing the War Refugee Board, that board is charged with the responsibility of giving effect to the policy of the American government "to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war". The order states further that the board "shall cooperate with all existing and future international organizations concerned with the problems of refugee rescue, maintenance, transportation, relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement." The groundwork is thus laid for working relations between the War Refugee Board, and American agency concerned with rescue and relief from enemy oppression, and the Intergovernmental Committee, an international agency concerned with that as well as other responsibilities - an international agency in whose founding and recent reorganization the American government took a leading part.

Building on this foundation, we are now engaged in discussions to insure the maximum benefit to the cause which we both serve, with the minimum of duplication and confusion. It appears that the War Refugee Board conceives of its activity as coming solely within the first class of work mentioned above in my description of the activities of the Intergovernmental Committee,

i.e., immediate rescue and relief, except for an interest in a relatively few projects falling within the second class of work - i.e., pre-armistice care of rescued or escaped persons - which may bear directly on the success of rescue enterprises. On the other hand - though the following statements must not be interpreted as binding the executive committee, which will come to its decision after my report on our present discussions has been submitted - it would seem that the presence of neutrals within the membership of the Intergovernmental Committee, and the limitation of its executive committee to negotiations with neutral or Allied States or organizations, imply that certain measures for rescue and relief can be better undertaken by national bodies, such as the War Refugee Board in the case of the United States.

For example, radio broadcasts intended to promote escape or preservation seem not suitable for the Intergovernmental Committee. Operations relating to the removal of persecuted persons from the Balkans through Turkey seem a present to be best carried out by the War Refugee Board acting in cooperation with other interested governments, and, so long as this is so, the Intergovernmental Committee will not wish to enter this field. Licenses to American philanthropic organizations for transferring funds abroad are of course the province of the War Refugee Board.

More generally, it would seem imperative that the War Refugee Board and the Intergovernmental Committee keep each other fully, regularly and promptly informed of proposed and actual activities; and that their field representatives, in countries where both bodies are represented, should be instructed to cooperate in the same way. Any operational project submitted by the Intergovernmental Committee for the consideration of the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States in accordance with the procedure already approved by the two governments should be considered on its merits; and, if it is jointly financed by the two governments, it should usually be administered by the Intergovernmental Committee, but there might well be special circumstances which would make it appropriate and convenient for a given project to be carried out in partnership between the Intergovernmental Committee and the War Refugee Board, or otherwise.

In one respect it is possible to speak for the executive committee with all possible confidence. It would desire me to offer to the officials of the War Refugee Board our unstinted co-operation. The comprehensive responsibility which is borne by the Intergovernmental Committee is so large, and the rescue and relief operations on which it has been working - energetically but quietly - since last summer are to tragically urgent and so often disappointing in their results at the last moment, that we need the closest possible association with the fresh vigor and interest, which the War Refugee Board represents.

(Signed) H. W. Emerson
4/21/44

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MEMORANDUM

April 17, 1944.

TO: Sir, Herbert Emerson, Director, Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.
FROM: Mr. John Pehle, Executive Director, War Refugee Board
SUBJECT: The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees and its Working Relations with the War Refugee Board.

This is a reply to your memorandum of April 14 in which you presented your proposals as to the working relationships that should prevail between the Intergovernmental Committee and the War Refugee Board. First of all I wish to state that I am in entire agreement with the proposals contained in the memorandum. It seems to me that on the basis of the working relationships which you outline, it should be possible for our respective agencies to continue to work in complete harmony toward our common goal of alleviating the plight of the refugees. We are sending copies of this exchange of memoranda to our representatives abroad, and are again emphasizing to them the necessity for the closest cooperation on the part of members of our respective staffs.

The discussions that we have held in recent days have been of extreme help to us in appreciating both the assigned duties and actual achievements of your organization. The spirit you have demonstrated leads me to believe that the relations between our two agencies will continue to be mutually helpful and friendly.

Your generous offer of unstinted cooperation is appreciated and I wish to assure you that we on our part intend to reciprocate wholeheartedly. Only in this way can we move forward together, united in our determination to meet the tragically pressing refugee problem.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle
4/21/44

- 1294 -
DOCUMENT

506

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMEMBASSY, LONDON
DATED: July 13, 1944
NUMBER: 5504

CONFIDENTIAL

TO WINANT, LONDON, FOR SIR HERBERT EMERSON FROM PEHLE.

Please deliver the following message to Sir Herbert Emerson from John W. Pehle, Executive Director of War Refugee Board:

"The text of this Government's reply to British Government's Aide Memoire of March 27, 1944, is now in London and, if not already seen by you will, I am sure, be made available by Winant.

Because of the urgency of the present situation particularly in the Balkans I earnestly hope that it will be possible to start at once credit scheme mentioned in the Aide Memoire, with IGC using JDC as its agent in the several countries where need is desperate.

In this connection JDC now has opportunity to spend at least four million dollars additional on productive rescue operations from Balkans. There is general agreement among all responsible agencies in Near East now coordinating their rescue activities under one committee in Ankara, that substantial numbers may now be saved. There is further evidence of a growing willingness in Rumania to cooperate. Under these conditions I believe that IGC has an excellent opportunity to initiate credit operations. Immediate assurance that IGC will underwrite credit operations already organized, as described in cable from Baerwald to you, will enable JDC to proceed immediately with new rescue opportunities. I earnestly hope that IGC will find it possible immediately to underwrite credit operations to the extent indicated."

HULL

DOCUMENT

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMEMBASSY, LONDON
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: July 20, 1944
NUMBER: 5734

SECRET

Will you send to Pehle, WEB, a paraphrase of the following message from Emerson:

By way of the US Embassy your message has been received by us. Due to the fact that only yesterday we at last concluded our arrangements with the British officials, our response was delayed. The following communication which today was cabled to Baerwald we hope will be satisfactory to you.

Your communication which was received through the US Embassy is reference. We are able only now to expedite credit plan. We are in a position under arrangements made with JDC acting as our agent to allot for the quarter ending September 30, 1944, the following sums: Northern Italy \$30,000, France \$300,000, Hungary \$300,000, Roumania \$300,000 making total for three months of \$930,000. Plus the above allocations which are out of public funds, from private funds which have been put at our disposal we can allocate \$20,000 in a lump sum. This last sum we should like to be utilized for Hungary although it is not essential. There should be kept a separate account of the allocation from private moneys.

Prior to the end of the quarter if a good case were established, we would be ready to give consideration to some increase for the current quarter in these allocations.

If the necessity for allocations is established, you can assume that like allocations will be available for the quarter commencing the first of October. We would, in fact, give consideration to an increase in the allocations if a good case is made. Prior to the sixteenth of September let us have proposals for that quarter.

With JDC we have made arrangement that our allocations were not to replace but supplement those which were made out of funds of JDC. For such time as there is a gentlemen's agreement that JDC will keep on allotting funds to the extent of their ability and having a regard for their very urgent commitments in other parts we do not desire to press this understanding too urgently. JDC, no doubt, will keep us confidentially advised concerning this matter. Until we see Schwartz our opinion is that implementation of the plan should not be delayed. If you are able to get the necessary data to him, you may proceed. We do not contemplate the immediate necessity of transmitting the complete details of our

arrangements to Schwartz unless you can do this. These can be discussed with him when he comes to London which will be presumably in early August. From our viewpoint, a vital instruction to Schwartz is that accounts be kept separate from allocations of JDC but the question of other immediate instructions we leave to you. It does not appear to be necessary for Malin to pay a visit at Lisbon at the present time in view of the arrival of Schwartz before long and as it would be inconvenient for Malin to make such a visit.

WINANT

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This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (BR)

U. S. URGENT
AMERICAN LEGATION
BERN

279

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, GENEVA, FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD. We are familiar with the report (contained in your cable 571 of October 12, 1943, to your Washington Delegation) concerning possible feeding programs in Rumania, Theresienstadt, Slovakia and Croatia and the need of funds therefor. We desire immediate information concerning what areas you could operate in right now, assuming that necessary funds are made available to you, to provide food and medicines to Jews and other persecuted groups in German-occupied areas who are denied the facilities available to the rest of the population. Please advise where food, medicines, and other supplies can be purchased and how much money is needed. We are prepared to see that funds are made available at once for necessary operations.

HULL
(AAB)

508

January 27, 1944.
11 p.m.

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

509

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: February 18, 1944
NUMBER: 1028

CONFIDENTIAL

Stating that the message from the War Refugee Board (your 279, January 27) was a matter of special satisfaction since for several months past their most earnest concern has been to draw attention of the Allied authorities to the almost tragic condition of various categories of civilians in Europe, letter from CICR has now been received.

I have been asked by CICR to convey to the War Refugee Board, after they acknowledged receipt of my letter of February 11, transmitting message contained in your 437, February 9, expression of their deep gratitude for this proof of confidence and the assurance that they would do everything in their power in close cooperation with the Joint Relief Commission and taking into account wishes of the donors to draw up a program of relief action which will be submitted to the Board at an early date. Further suggestions of a practical character concerning the development of this action and the initiation of other similar action will also be made by CICR in due course.

HARRISON

DOCUMENT

510

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: September 6, 1944
NUMBER: 3074

SECRET

CABLE TO MCCLELLAND

Unofficial reports reaching WRB indicate that Intercross believes Theresienstadt a privileged camp and does not consider necessary any action calculated to bring its inmates within scope of Intercross activity.

Please advise Intercross that Board has received repeated reports of recent deportations from Theresienstadt to extermination camps which, if true, indicate that its inmates enjoy no security. In addition, well-known tendencies in certain official circles in Germany to exterminate maximum number of Jews before end of war make likely sudden deterioration of position in Theresienstadt and elsewhere unless adequate precautions are taken betimes. Board is therefore unable to share moral responsibility for possible loss of human lives involved in an express or tacit approval of reported Intercross position. Board is convinced that Intercross too would not like to bear such responsibility.

Accordingly, Board earnestly hopes that Intercross will extend its protective activities to Theresienstadt inmates including distribution of Palestine certificates and other documents entitling them to partial assimilation with civilian internees, eligibility for exchange and general Intercross supervision.

In general, please submit to Intercross the Board's view that in dealing with Jews in German-controlled territory in the coming critical weeks, it is not enough to attempt to correct unsatisfactory situations already in existence. In the light of present circumstances it is urgent that all measures be taken to be prepared to deal with sudden deterioration. Therefore, Intercross is earnestly urged to take preventive as well as corrective action, however much this may go beyond the traditional pattern of Intercross activities. If this line of action is unprecedented, so is the situation.

If possible discuss the foregoing points with Huber personally.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 159.

HULL

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511

COMITE INTERNATIONAL
De La
CROIX-ROUGE

Geneve, le May 30, 1945.

AGENCE CENTRALE
DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

Brig. General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Sir,

The conclusion of hostilities in Europe involves obviously a substantial change and reduction in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The relief scheme for what were known as "unassimilated groups", and, in particular, for Jews in Germany and in the occupied territories, which had been undertaken in the face of the greatest obstacles, is drawing to a close. The International Committee therefore consider it an essential duty at the present time to thank the organizations which have been particularly helpful in this welfare work.

The War Refugee Board, which was called into being under the wise and memorable leadership of President Roosevelt, enabled some tens of thousands of the most sorely tried war victims to receive some degree of help, although this was on a modest scale, in comparison to the stupendous needs of the sufferers. According to testimonies received repeatedly from the latter, this help, however, in many cases spelt rescue from death by starvation.

The International Committee would therefore like to thank the War Refugee Board sincerely for the effective and understanding assistance which they have invariably received through Mr. Roswell D. McClelland. The Committee greatly regret that such fruitful co-operation with the War Refugee Board, and in particular with their distinguished representative in Switzerland, should come to an end. Mr. McClelland's resourcefulness and selfless labours have contributed in large measure to the success of the enterprise, and he was latterly very ably seconded by Mr. Katzki.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)
MAX HUBER

Max Huber

Honorary and Acting President of the
International Committee of the Red Cross

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512

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

August 11, 1945



Dear Mr. Huber:

Through your delegate in Washington, I have just received your letter of May 30, 1945. Your expression of thanks to the Board is greatly appreciated.

I wish to take this opportunity to express to you my personal gratitude for the service your Committee has rendered the Board, particularly in its program to bring relief to the suffering inmates of German concentration camps. I wish also to thank you for the cooperation your Committee has generously given to Mr. McClelland and Mr. Katzki in their arduous duties as representatives of the Board in Switzerland. In spite of many obstacles, the Board was able to save and bring relief to many thousands of victims of Nazi oppression in its unique life-saving mission. We are grateful for the part the International Red Cross played in that great undertaking.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
WILLIAM O'DWYER

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Max Huber,
Honorary and Acting President,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
Geneva, Switzerland.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

513

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

August 28, 1944

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. STETTINIUS

As you know, a major activity of the War Refugee Board has been psychological warfare designed to induce and persuade the enemy to cease the persecution of the Jews and other minorities. The basis of this program, which has been carried out in cooperation with the State Department, Office of War Information and other agencies, has been the threat to punish every Axis war criminal who has participated, directly or indirectly, in such persecution. Threats of this nature had been made by the United Nations, including various branches of this Government, even before the War Refugee Board was established, and they have since been repeated with increasing tempo. For your information we have collected and are attaching hereto those declarations which specifically set forth the determination of the United States and of other United Nations to punish the perpetrators of atrocities and other crimes against Jews and other minorities even where the victims are or were nationals of Germany or of a satellite power.

We had assumed that one of the primary functions of the United Nations Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes which was created in 1943, would be to devise procedures for the gathering of evidence and the ascertainment, trial and punishment of those enemy nationals who had participated in such war crimes. Much to our surprise we were informed by our General Counsel, Mr. Josiah E. DuBois, upon his return from London recently that he understood from a conversation with Mr. Pell, the United States representative on the Commission, that the Commission takes the view that war crimes under international law do not include crimes committed by an Axis nation or its nationals against its own subjects or the subjects of another Axis nation. Accordingly, it appears that the Commission is not making any provision for the just punishment of such war criminals.

Needless to say, it would be a fearful miscarriage of justice if such war criminals were permitted to escape punishment for their inhuman crimes. Moreover, the failure to implement the numerous threats of punishment would not only subject to ridicule the authors thereof, but would render it far more difficult to deter similar criminal conduct in the future. The failure to punish the criminals of World War I may well have removed a deterrent to the commission of brutalities against civilian populations in this war, including the mass murder of the Jews.

According to Mr. DuBois' report, Mr. Pell is not satisfied with this position of the United Nations Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes, but seems not to have received instructions from this Government in the matter. Mr. Pell believes that the most effective way of inducing the Commission to broaden the scope of its work to include the punishment of all Axis war criminals, including those guilty of crimes against persons in the above categories, would be to have the United States Government instruct him to urge the Commission to include such crimes in its program and, if possible, to have the other governments represented on the Commission instruct their representatives along similar lines. Another suggested step would be to publicize such an instruction by releasing it to the press.

Accordingly, we suggest that the Department advise Mr. Pell along the lines of the proposed cable attached hereto indicating clearly that the declared policy of the United States Government is to ensure the just punishment of all Axis war criminals, including those guilty of crimes against the Jews and other minorities whether or not the victims of such crimes are of the same nationality as the evildoers; and that Mr. Pell should insist upon the formulation of a program by the Commission effectuating this policy.

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Attachments omitted. - Ed.

- 1304 -

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514

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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December 14, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

This is to let you know that the matter discussed in your memorandum of August 28 and my memorandum of September 4 has not been forgotten. That subject, together with the whole war crimes situation is under active consideration by this and other interested departments. We will inform you more fully regarding the matter just as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.

Mr. J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board.

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FORM TFEL-1 (Special)
TREASURY DEPARTMENT
Foreign Funds Control

License No. W-2106 as amended
DATE: February 4, 1944

LICENSE

(GRANTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 8389
OF APRIL 10, 1940, AS AMENDED, AND THE REGULATIONS
ISSUED THEREUNDER)

To: American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.
(Name of Licensee)

270 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.
(Address of Licensee)

Sirs:

1. In order to arrange for the evacuation to places of safety or relative safety as shall be selected by your representative of persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory whose lives are in imminent danger and, pending possible evacuation, to sustain and safeguard the lives of such persons, your representative in Switzerland (including such agents as he may appoint) is hereby licensed notwithstanding the provisions of General Ruling No. 11 to communicate with persons in enemy-occupied territory in any manner he deems necessary or expedient and to take all other appropriate action, including the acquisition of necessary funds, goods or services from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory against payment in accordance with the terms of this license. The necessary funds to finance such operations may be obtained by any of the following methods:

(a) The first method is the purchase of currency or exchange of the country in which the operations are to be effected from persons in Switzerland who your representative, after consulting with the United States Legation in Bern when feasible, is reasonably certain have held such currency or exchange since prior to the freezing of such country by the United States or have since acquired such currency or exchange in such manner as has not benefited the enemy. The sellers of such currency or exchange may be reimbursed therefor in Swiss francs at the prevailing unofficial rates of exchange in Switzerland.

(b) The second method is the acquisition of local currencies or exchange from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territories for which reimbursement will not be made until after the war. In order to insure reimbursement after the war to the persons supplying such currencies or exchange, blocked accounts may be established on your books

in the United States, or in a bank in the United States or a bank in Switzerland. No payments may be made from any such blocked account without the specific approval of the Treasury Department and no assignments may be made of any interest in such blocked account with such approval.

(c) The third method should not be used if it is feasible to obtain the local funds by either of the first two methods. The third method is the acquisition of the necessary local funds, goods or services from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory against payment in free exchange or free currency notes. Your representative should take reasonable steps to avoid such foreign exchange or free currency notes being paid to persons who will make it available to the enemy.

2. The total amount of dollars or Swiss francs paid out or set up in blocked accounts or otherwise obligated under the terms of this license shall not exceed 2,500,000 Swiss francs, or the dollar equivalent thereof, during the six months' period beginning January 1, 1944.

3. Your representative should keep the American Legation in Switzerland fully informed with respect to the financial transactions effected under this license. In so far as feasible your representative should make certain that the persons from whom the local currencies or exchange are purchased are acceptable to the Legation. Your representative should satisfy himself that payments to such persons will not benefit the enemy.

4. Periodic reports with regard to any operations engaged in under this license should be filed with the Treasury Department by your representative through the United States Legation in Bern.

5. This license is granted upon the statements and representations filed with the Treasury Department, and is subject to the condition, among others, that you will comply in all respects with Executive Order No. 8389 of April 10, 1940, as amended, and the regulations issued thereunder and the terms of this license.

6. This license is not transferable, is subject to the provisions of Executive Order No. 8389 of April 10, 1940, as amended, and the regulations issued thereunder and may be revoked, modified, or declared void at any time at the discretion of the Secretary of the Treasury acting directly or through the agency through which the license was issued, or any other agency designated by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Assistant to the Secretary

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FORM TFEL-1 (Special)
TREASURY DEPARTMENT
Foreign Funds Control

LICENSE No. W-2177
DATE: April 12, 1944

LICENSE
(GRANTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 8389
OF APRIL 10, 1940, AS AMENDED, AND THE REGULATIONS
ISSUED THEREUNDER)

To: Jewish Labor Committee.
(Name of Licensee)

175 East Broadway, New York, N.Y.
(Address of Licensee)

Sirs:

1. In order to arrange for the evacuation to places of safety or relative safety as shall be selected by your representative of persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory whose lives are in imminent danger and, pending possible evacuation, to sustain and safeguard the lives of such persons, your representative in Portugal (including such agents as he may appoint) is hereby licensed notwithstanding the provisions of General Ruling No. 11 to communicate with persons in enemy-occupied territory in any manner he deems necessary or expedient and to take all other appropriate action, including the acquisition of necessary funds, goods, or services from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory against payment in accordance with the terms of this license. The necessary funds to finance such operations may be obtained by any of the following methods:

(a) The first method is the purchase of currency or exchange of the country in which the operations are to be effected from persons in Portugal who your representative, after consulting with the United States Legation in Lisbon when feasible, is reasonably certain have held such currency or exchange since prior to the freezing of such country by the United States or have since acquired such currency or exchange in such manner as has not benefited the enemy. The sellers of such currency or exchange may be reimbursed therefor in escudos at the prevailing unofficial rates of exchange in Portugal.

(b) The second method is the acquisition of local currencies or exchange from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territories for which reimbursement will not be made until after the war. In order to insure reimbursement after the war to the persons supplying such currencies or exchange, blocked accounts may be established on your books

in the United States, or in a bank in the United States or a bank in Portugal. No payments may be made from any such blocked account without the specific approval of the Treasury Department and no assignments may be made of any interest in such blocked account without such approval.

(c) The third method should not be used if it is feasible to obtain the local funds by either of the first two methods. The third method is the acquisition of the necessary local funds, goods or services from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory against payment in free exchange or free currency notes. Your representative should take reasonable steps to avoid such foreign exchange or free currency notes being paid to persons who will make it available to the enemy.

2. The total amount of funds paid out or set up in blocked accounts or otherwise obligated under the terms of this license shall not exceed the amounts of dollars (or the foreign currency equivalent thereof) authorized by specific Treasury licenses to be used under this license.

3. Your representative should keep the American Legation in Portugal fully informed with respect to the financial transactions effected under this license. Insofar as feasible your representative should make certain that the persons from whom the local currency or exchange is purchased are acceptable to the Legation. Your representative should satisfy himself that payments to such persons will not benefit the enemy.

4. Periodic reports with regard to any operations engaged in under this license should be filed with the Treasury Department by your representative through the United States Legation in Lisbon, Portugal.

5. This license is granted upon the statements and representations filed with the Treasury Department, and is subject to the condition, among others, that you will comply in all respects with Executive Order No. 8389 of April 10, 1940, as amended, and the regulations issued thereunder and the terms of this license.

6. This license shall expire six months from date hereof, is not transferable, is subject to the provisions of Executive Order No. 8389 of April 10, 1940, as amended, and the regulations issued thereunder and may be revoked, modified, or declared void at any time at the discretion of the Secretary of the Treasury acting directly or through the agency through which the license was issued, or any other agency designated by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(Signed)
ORVIS A. SCHMIDT

Orvis A. Schmidt
Acting Director

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THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP

Washington

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June 3, 1944

Dear Mr. Penle:

I think that the meeting that you, Mr. Abramson, Captain Creech, Commander Freeman, and myself held in my office on June 2, clarified the situation relative to communications concerning refugees.

In accordance with the conclusions reached, this office will proceed on the basis that the War Refugee Board is interested only in the broader aspects of refugee problems, and is not concerned with individual refugees or with transactions between individuals in connection with refugee situations, and is therefore not interested as to the disposition of communications in such cases.

Your understanding of the problems that refugee traffic present to Censorship, and your offer to aid in every way that you can, is appreciated, and I welcome your suggestion to make available a member of the staff of the War Refugee Board for close liaison with the Office of Censorship. As Captain Creech and I stated in the meeting, it is the desire of this office to be as liberal as possible with refugee traffic. Our actions, however, must be consistent with security, the obligations of which at this time require from Censorship the most rigorous and positive action. I hope that the time will be soon when we can relax some of the rigorous measures presently required.

Upon the establishment of the liaison above referred to this office will make available for examination, to the person designated, traffic with which we consider the War Refugee Board might be concerned, so that the Board will be able to render to us an indication of its interest.

It is understood that your liaison representative will be in a position to furnish to this office any information in the possession of the Board which might pertain to individuals or situations referred to in the communications involved.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
BYRON PRICE

Byron Price,
Director.

DOCUMENT

C O N F I D E N T I A L

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
Overseas Operations Branch
Washington

CENTRAL DIRECTIVE

Week of February 24 - March 2, 1944

Copy No. 52

War Refugee Board

1. Background

On January 22 President Roosevelt set up a War Refugee Board consisting of the Secretaries of State, War and Treasury, and issued an Executive Order stating: "It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death, and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." A White House statement issued the same day said that "it was urgent that action be taken at once to forestall the plan of the Nazis to exterminate all the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe."

2. Propaganda Treatment

- (a) We should use all available news pegs to emphasize, especially to the satellites, that the rescue of the Jews and other "persecuted minorities" now under Nazi rule is a part of the policy of the United States Government.
- (b) In news commentary we must remind the satellites such as Hungary, whose large Jewish population includes many refugees, that we shall judge them in part by the manner in which they treat the Jews and other helpless minorities in their midst.
- (c) We should make clear that all those who participate in any way in crimes against helpless minorities share in the guilt of the executioners, and will be judged and punished in accord with our solemn pledges. We should point out that this was enunciated as agreed United Nations policy in the declaration of December 17, 1942.

- (d) In our output to Sweden, Switzerland, and Portugal, as well as to the satellites, we should pay tribute to the humanitarian work these three neutral countries have already done in helping refugees to escape from Nazi control and in giving them refuge, food and shelter. In this way we can use the power of example to influence our listeners in enemy-occupied countries to show humanity toward helpless minorities.

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THE PRESIDENT'S WAR RELIEF CONTROL BOARD
WASHINGTON BUILDING
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1944

My dear Mr. Pehle:

A part of the procedure set up last year in connection with the National War Fund is the review of budgets and programs of member agencies by this Board with the advice of an informal committee composed of representatives of various Government agencies interested in war relief matters.

The budgets of the member agencies of the National War Fund for 1944 have now been presented to the National War Fund and the Board has invited this Advisory Committee to meet with it at the offices of the Board in the Washington Building, Room 1044, on Friday, February 25, at 10:00 a.m. As a number of the budgets include projects for refugee relief the Board has thought that these would undoubtedly be of interest to your Board and has therefore directed me to invite you to be present at the meeting on February 25 or to designate someone to represent you at that meeting. It is expected that copies of the budgets will be available some days before the meeting for preliminary review by those who will attend.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
HOMER S. FOX

Homer S. Fox
Acting Executive Secretary

The Honorable
John W. Fehle, Acting Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Care of Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



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Gentlemen:

You have advised us that certain persons have asserted that the provisions of Executive Order 9417 exempt persons and agencies concerned with refugee relief from complying with requirements made by The President's War Relief Control Board under the provisions of Executive Order 9205.

As we understand them, there is no overlapping between the two Executive Orders. However, in order to resolve any doubts in the minds of third parties, the War Refugee Board hereby delegates to The President's War Relief Control Board such authority, if any, as may have been transferred by Executive Order 9417 from The President's War Relief Control Board to the War Refugee Board.

You are at liberty to show this letter to any person or agency in your discretion.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

The President's War Relief Control Board
Washington Building
Washington, D. C.

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March 4, 1944

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

It is mutually understood by the War Refugee Board and the President's War Relief Control Board that:

1 - The provisions of Executive Order 9417 dated January 22, 1944, establishing the War Refugee Board, do not exempt persons or agencies concerned with refugee relief from complying with requirements made by The President's War Relief Control Board under the provisions of Executive Order 9205, dated July 25, 1942;

2 - The War Refugee Board may call upon The President's War Relief Control Board to assist in carrying out the purposes of Executive Order 9417 by securing appropriate action in the field of refugee relief by persons and agencies to the extent authorized by Executive Order 9205.

War Refugee Board:

CORDELL HULL
Secretary of State

JOSEPH E. DAVIES,
Chairman, P.W.R.C.B.

H. MORGENTHAU Jr.
Secretary of the Treasury

CHARLES P. TAFT

HENRY L. STIMSON
Secretary of War

CHARLES WARREN

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WAR DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

3 March 1944

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As I informed you previously, the proposal contained in your letter of January 28, 1944, regarding War Department cooperation with the War Refugee Board, was referred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their consideration.

As a result of their study on this matter, a message similar to that proposed by you has been dispatched to the appropriate U. S. Army Commanders. I have been informed that the Navy Department has taken the necessary action to inform the U. S. Navy Commander concerned.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
JOHN J. McCLOY
Assistant Secretary of War

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 8, 1944

Gentlemen:

The War Refugee Board, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War, was created by President Roosevelt on January 22, 1944. The President's purpose in creating the Board, as well as the Board's duties and authority are set out in Executive Order No. 9417, a copy of which is enclosed for your information.

The Board is not unmindful of the fact that private agencies, including yourselves, have for some time been active in seeking means to effect the relief and rescue of Jews and other minority groups threatened with extermination by the enemy. Nor is the Board unmindful of the fact that such agencies have actually brought relief to and effected the rescue of a number of such victims of enemy persecution.

The Board is presently preparing programs for action and earnestly solicits the advice and cooperation of every agency concerned with the problem. Consequently, the Board would appreciate it if you would submit to it, at your earliest possible convenience, a detailed statement in writing of such specific action as you believe the Board should take to effectuate the policy announced in the Executive Order, and of the measures that you are equipped to take to lend assistance to such program. While your statement may be informal, it should contain all available information necessary or incidental to the effectuation of any project you suggest. In this connection, you should bear in mind that the Board must, of necessity, confine itself to projects involving the relief or rescue of groups of persons and cannot deal with proposals limited to any specific individual.

The Board is fully cognizant of the difficulties involved in the preparation of any such statement, but nevertheless believes that the effort thus expended will have its compensation in achievement.

I think that you can understand our desire for having the suggestions of all agencies submitted to the Board in writing and at the earliest possible moment. On the other hand, I want you to know that

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the staff of the Board is always available for discussions with your representatives and the consideration of such further proposals or suggestions as you may be prepared to make.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Advisory Council on European Jewish Affairs
of the World Jewish Congress
330 West 42nd Street, Room 819
New York, New York

DOCUMENT

UNITED STATES TREASURY FCR WAR REFUGEE BOARD PURPOSES

COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Switzerland	American Christian Committee for Refugees	\$ 149,500	
	American Friends Service Committee	25,000	
	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee	13,679,000	
	Belgian War Relief, Inc.	115,000	
	Friends of Luxembourg, Inc.	45,000	
	International Rescue and Relief Committee	225,000	
	Jewish Labor Committee	55,000	
	Poale Zion Organization and Jewish National Workers Alliance	18,000	
	The Queen Wilhelmina Fund, Inc.	215,000	
	Self-Help of Emigres from Central Europe	40,000	
	Unitarian Service Committee	111,000	
	Union of Orthodox Rabbis	700,000	
	Vaad Hahatzala Emergency Committee	1,231,100	
	World Jewish Congress	237,010	
Portugal		\$16,845,610	
	American Friends Service Committee	25,000	
	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee	102,000	
	Jewish Labor Committee	10,000	
	World Jewish Congress	50,000	
		187,000	

COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Albania	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee- - - - -	\$ 10,000	
Spain	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee- - - - -	\$ 10,000	
Great Britain	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee- - - - -	150,000	
Palestine	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee- - - - -	150,000	
	American Relief for Czechoslovakia - -	20,000	
	French Relief Fund, Inc. - -	350,000	
	Polish War Relief, Inc. - -	150,000	
		400,000	
Morocco	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee- - - - -	920,000	
Russia	Poale Zion Organization and Jewish National Workers Alliance- - - - -	761,353	
		33,000	
		794,353	
	Vaad Hahatza'a Emergency Committee - -	19,000	
	Vaad Hahatza'a Emergency Committee - -	19,000	
		5,200	
		5,200	
	TOTAL AMOUNT OF ALL PRIVATE AGENCY REMITTANCES AUTHORIZED	\$20,198,763	

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

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Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE, MORNING NEWSPAPERS,
Friday, January 28, 1944.

No. 1

The War Refugee Board held its first meeting on Wednesday, January 26. The meeting was attended by Secretaries Hull, Morgenthau, and Stimson.

The Board announced that all United States diplomatic and consular offices throughout the world have been instructed to do everything possible to effectuate this Government's war refugee policy as announced by the President, bearing in mind the urgency of the problem.

The instructions issued covered the following points:

All missions were advised that instructions had been issued by the President to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of War to endeavor to effect immediately the rescue and relief of Jews in Europe and of other victims of Nazi terror. The President's Executive Order, issued on January 22, 1944, contained the following declaration:

"It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war."

For the purpose of carrying out this policy, the Order sets up a War Refugee Board composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of War. This Board is responsible to the President, and to it is assigned the responsibility for carrying out the policy above announced. While the Board is responsible directly for giving effect to the Policy, it is directed to work with UNRRA, the Inter-governmental Committee, and other appropriate international organizations. The President made it clear that in dealing with this important and difficult problem he expected to have full cooperation from the governments of the United Nations and other foreign governments. The facilities of the Department of State, the Treasury

Department, and the War Department were direct to be employed to lend the fullest aid possible to victims of Axis persecution. The President emphasized the urgent necessity of frustrating the Nazi design to exterminate Jewish and other minority groups in Europe.

Cooperation was directed with all public agencies and established private organizations in the rescue areas of those officers who are dealing with this problem, to the end that effective programs and measures for relief, rescue, maintenance, and transportation of persecuted victims may be developed and carried out. Immediate reports relating to the situation existing in the countries of the respective officers have been requested, which should include information as to the permission granted to war refugees to enter each country, the encouragement and cooperation given to such entry, and the extent to which each country does not cooperate in permitting entry. Where refugees are refused entry at frontiers, the facts and reasons for such action have been requested.

Recommendations as to possible lines of action have been asked, with notation of special obstacles which may handicap rescue operations and methods of overcoming such obstacles.

Foreign governments are being approached to ascertain the extent to which they are prepared to cooperate.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE,
Friday, February 4, 1944.

RELEASE NO. 2

The War Refugee Board met today and designated John W. Pehle as Acting Executive Director.

Mr. Pehle is Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, and Director of Foreign Funds Control. The Secretary of the Treasury has given him leave of absence to serve as Acting Executive Director of the War Refugee Board.

Pehle's work as Director of Foreign Funds Control has afforded him wide experience in negotiating with representatives of foreign governments as well as with the various departments and agencies of this government that will be called on to participate in the work of the War Refugee Board. His work in these fields also has brought him into close touch with the problems now before the Board, and he is well known to the private agencies interested in relief work and the rescue of refugees.

Pehle is a career man in the Government, having entered the Office of the General Counsel of the Treasury Department upon his graduation from the Yale Law School in 1934. He was named Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury and Director of Foreign Funds Control in 1940.

Members of the War Refugee Board are the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of War.

DOCUMENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

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Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE NO. 3

Wednesday, February 9, 1944.

The War Refugee Board announced today that it is soliciting the written suggestions of all interested private agencies as to the measures that they believe the Board can take to rescue and otherwise bring relief to Jews and other victims of enemy persecution.

The Board also asked that private agencies advise it promptly of such measures as they are equipped to take to lend assistance in its work. In this connection, the Board has advised the private agencies concerned that it will have to confine itself to projects involving the relief or rescue of groups of persons. The Board stated that it will not be able to deal with proposals limited to seeking out and rescuing any individual.

In writing to the private organizations concerned with the problem, the Board stated that it was not unmindful of the fact that private agencies have for some time been seeking means to effect the relief and rescue of Jews and other minority groups threatened with extermination by the enemy. A number of victims of enemy persecution have been rescued or brought relief through the efforts of such private agencies.

It was stated at the Board's offices today that although it was believed that all interested private agencies had been solicited, it was possible that a few were omitted by inadvertence. A Board spokesman stated that any interested private organization that does not receive, within the next few days, a letter from the Board soliciting its views and cooperation, should communicate with the Board promptly.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE,
Monday, February 21, 1944.

RELEASE NO. 4

John W. Pehle, Acting Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, today announced that Ira Hirschmann, vice-president of Bloomingdale Brothers, Inc., New York City, has been designated as the Board's special representative in Ankara, Turkey, assigned as Special Attaché to the Embassy in connection with war refugee matters.

Mr. Hirschmann arrived in Ankara February 14, and is now engaged in the development of programs and the implementation of measures for the rescue, transportation, maintenance and relief of Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe.

Mr. Hirschmann has spent considerable time in western and central Europe. In 1938 he attended the Evian Conference as an observer for the United States Government. Later he went to Austria where with the cooperation of friends he arranged for several hundred refugees to leave the country.

Mr. Hirschmann's most recent government service was as special assistant to William Davis of the War Labor Board. He is interested in civic activities and serves as a member of the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE, MORNING NEWSPAPERS,
Tuesday, March 28, 1944.

RELEASE NO. 5

In a news dispatch from Stockholm, dated March 25, the Associated Press reported that Sweden had turned down an American Government request that some Swedish shipping be used to evacuate Jewish refugees from Rumanian and Black Sea ports to Palestine. The reason given for the Swedish attitude was said to be lack of available shipping. The War Refugee Board confirms that the matter has been under discussion. The fact that no arrangement for Swedish shipping has as yet proved possible does not reflect any negative attitude on the part of the Swedish Government which has continually shown a sympathetic interest in humanitarian efforts of this kind. The Swedish Minister has assured the War Refugee Board that the Swedish Government is prepared to do everything possible to aid the efforts of the Board.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, March 30, 1944

RELEASE NO. 6

A Colorado farmer today sent the War Refugee Board a donation of \$100 "to help finance your program" and an offer to take in five Jewish refugee families "when the opportunity arrives."

In a letter to John W. Pehle, The Board's executive director, Harry C. Rogers of Dove Creek, Colorado, expressed his own and his neighbors' gratification over the establishment of the Board and its "humane undertaking" of rescuing the Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution.

"I have been talking to some of my neighbors about the rehabilitation of the Jews as a personal responsibility and am finding fast response," he wrote. "Our Bible teaches us 'We are our brothers's keeper' and this call from the persecuted Jews of Europe is the clearest and most appealing to Christianity that has been heard in 2,000 years.

"Enclosed is my check for \$100 to help finance your program. I want to offer you my personal assistance when the opportunity arrives and homes are sought for these people. I will take five families on my own farm and will see that they are sheltered under the principles of the Four Freedoms and tutored to love our constitutional government."

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING NEWSPAPERS
Monday, April 3, 1944

RELEASE NO. 7

The War Refugee Board is using all the power and prestige of the United States Government to save the victims of Nazi persecution who can still be rescued, John W. Pehle, the Board's executive director, told 600 Midwest leaders of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee meeting at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago yesterday. He said the diplomatic, fiscal and military agencies of the Government as well as the facilities of the Office of War Information, War Shipping Administration, and other agencies have been marshaled for the job.

"The present military situation in the Balkans presents the greatest challenge to the Board in changing the attitude of the enemy," Mr. Pehle declared. "President Roosevelt's recent warning to Germany and her satellites of the consequences of further persecutions in their territories, and the subsequent British endorsement of that warning have provided heavy ammunition on the psychological warfare front. Cooperating with the War Refugee Board, the Office of War Information and the British Broadcasting Company have carried and will continue to carry that message in every language to every land."

Mr. Pehle emphasized that the Board was using all methods in its rescue work - formal and informal, direct and indirect, conventional and unconventional. All of these methods, he said, have as their goal the rescue of human beings, particularly Jews, from the barbarism of the enemy.

Stressing the importance of collaboration between the War Refugee Board and private agencies operating in the refugee field, Mr. Pehle asserted that the War Refugee Board offers new opportunities for private philanthropies to operate. Such collaboration, he said, is "the best method of obtaining quick results in a desperate period."

Paying tribute to the work of the J.D.C., he said: "It has done a magnificent job. Its experience, its personnel, its know-how, and its funds have been of invaluable assistance to the work of the War Refugee Board in rescuing the helpless, homeless and stateless refugees of Europe." He added that the War Refugee Board had received excellent suggestions from the chairman of the J.D.C.'s European committee "who knows the problems first hand."

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING NEWSPAPERS
April 12, 1944

RELEASE NO. 8

John W. Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, today announced the appointment of Iver C. Olsen as the Board's special representative in Stockholm, Sweden, assigned as special attache to the Legation on War Refugee matters.

The new appointee was named by the Board to develop programs and implement measures for the rescue, maintenance and relief of Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe. Ira Hirschmann of New York City, who was designated in February as the Board's representative in Turkey is due in Washington this month for "urgent consultation" with the Board.

Mr. Olsen, a native of Norway, has been a financial attache of the Treasury's Division of Monetary Research since October, 1943. Prior to that time he was special assistant to the director of Foreign Funds Control.

A resident of Gilford, New Hampshire, he received his education at Boston University; the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University; and Crawford's Diplomatic School of Washington. He is the author of numerous articles on banking, investments and economic problems.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING NEWSPAPERS
Monday April 17, 1944

RELEASE NO. 9

John W. Pehle, executive director of the War Refugee Board, today announced the appointment of Dr. Robert C. Dexter, executive director and acting commissioner for Europe of the Unitarian Service Committee, as the Board's special representative in Lisbon, Portugal.

Dr. Dexter has been in Lisbon since the fall of 1942. In his new post, as special attache to the Legation on war refugee matters, he will work with public and private agencies in developing programs and implementing measures for the rescue, transportation, maintenance and relief of refugees.

He has spent much of his life abroad. For seven months in the winter of 1941 and 1942 he directed the Unitarian Service activities in Portugal and England. In 1940 he spent three months in Europe surveying refugee needs. At that time he visited 13 countries and was instrumental in securing the release of 1,500 prisoners in Hungary. In 1938 he was head of the Commission for Service in Czechoslovakia and was decorated by the Czech Government-in-Exile for his work with Czech refugees. Before the war he traveled in Hungary and Rumania and attended many sessions of the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations in Geneva. In 1926 he was one of 50 university professors sent to the Hague and Germany by the Carnegie Endowment.

A graduate of Brown University, Dr. Dexter was for 10 years a social worker in the United States and Canada and taught social and political science at Skidmore College and Clark University.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING PAPERS
Saturday, April 22, 1944

RELEASE NO. 10

John W. Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, today announced the appointment of Roswell McClelland as the Board's special representative in Bern, Switzerland, assigned as special attache to the Legation on war refugee matters.

Mr. McClelland has been identified with the American Friends Service Committee's refugee work in Europe for the last four years. In 1940 he was in charge of the Committee's office in Rome, working with Jewish and Catholic groups who were aiding refugees in leaving the country. In 1941 he worked with the Quaker Center in Marseille, France. In 1942, he was placed in charge of the Committee's work in Geneva, Switzerland.

In his new post as War Refugee Board appointee he will develop programs and inaugurate measures to rescue Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe who are in imminent danger of death.

A native of California, Mr. McClelland received his early education in Switzerland. He is a graduate of Duke University and received a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University. He is the son of Ross St. John McClelland of Los Angeles, international banker and engineer.

DOCUMENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD
Executive Office of the President
Washington

RELEASE NO. 11

(The following radio broadcast by Mr. John W. Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, and Baulkhage, Blue Network guest commentator, on the program of the United Jewish Appeal for Refugees, Overseas Needs and Palestine is scheduled for presentation from Washington by the National Broadcasting Company between 12m. and 12:30 p.m. Eastern War Time, Sunday, May 14, and is for release at that time.)

BAUKHAGE: Baulkhage talking! From Washington where on January 22 of this year by executive order the President set up the War Refugee Board consisting of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of War, quote "to take action for the immediate rescue from the Nazis of as many as possible of the persecuted minorities of Europe - racial, religious and political - all civilian victims of enemy savagery," end quote. Those were the words of the official statement.

A full-time executive director of that Board was appointed. He is John Pehle, assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, and on leave as director of Foreign Funds Control. Mr. Pehle is sitting right here with me now.

The driving force in every successful effort is a personality - a human being - and I want to bring that personality before you. Mr. Pehle, I want you to tell me in your own words something about the motives behind the formation of the War Refugee Board.

PEHLE: Well, in the first place, Mr. Baulkhage, let me say that there is more than a personality behind this effort. A nation is behind it and I think that the effort is typically American. The fact that in the midst of a great war the President saw fit to assign to his three top cabinet officers the task of rescuing the refugees from the clutches of the enemy is significant. It brings home with great force the urgency of the problem.

BAUKHAGE: Yes, I can understand that urgency. We know that thousands of persons are being rounded up every day and shipped to execution centers like those in Poland. We hear about these things, but they seem rather vague.

PEHLE: Let me tell you, Mr. Baukhage, one typical story - a story that began in Poland but, thank heaven, didn't end there. There is nothing vague about David, a little boy, a Polish Jew, 8 years old when he saw his parents killed in Warsaw by a Nazi firing squad. He ran away to the woods. For weeks he wandered alone until a kindly Christian farmer and his wife hid him in their home. Later the underground helped him across the border to Roumania. There he was caught in the general roundup of foreign Jews and sent to exile in Transnistria which, you know, was German-occupied Russia.

BAUKHAGE: It was in that particular exile, wasn't it, that over half of 200,000 refugees died of mistreatment and starvation.

REHLE: That's right. Several months ago - along with 40,000 fellow exiles - David was brought back to Bucharest, Roumania, when pressure was put on the Roumanians to save the surviving refugees from annihilation by the re-treating Germany army.

A few weeks ago, with the help of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, David obtained passage on a ship which sailed from Constanza across the Black Sea to Istanbul. The Joint Distribution Committee provided funds for the voyage. David had no documents - none of the exit and entrance permits required of travelers. But thanks to the efforts of Ambassador Steinhardt and the War Refugee Board representative in Turkey he got through Turkey and on to Palestine. David has been through fire. But now he's safe. He faces life instead of death.

BAUKHAGE: That brings it home. But just how, Mr. Pehle, does your Board function at this end? Where does Washington come in?

PEHLE: Much of the work is done through diplomatic channels, with the assistance of the State Department and its foreign representatives. Today the United States, as one of the recognized leaders among nations, is in a position to bring home to other countries - allies, neutrals, and Axis satellites alike - what the American people want done about refugees. After all, the job of the War Refugee Board is to carry out the desires of the American people on this subject.

BAUKHAGE: What about diplomatic pressure on the satellite countries, Mr. Pehle? Can that actually be used to save lives?

PEHLE: It certainly can.

BAUKHAGE: How?

PEHLE: The satellites no longer have any illusions about the outcome of the war.

BAUKHAGE: They certainly shouldn't have.

PEHLE: They know that Germany will be defeated. We can bring ~ about a more liberal attitude toward the refugees by making it crystal-clear to these countries that the United States and the United Nations will bear in mind their treatment of minorities when the time for final settlement comes.

BAUKHAGE: Let's see, it was only a few weeks ago, wasn't it, that the President warned Germany and the satellites of the consequences of further persecution of the Jews.

PEHLE: That's right. And he called upon all the free peoples of Europe and Asia "to open their frontiers to all victims of oppression."

BAUKHAGE: Have you any way of knowing that such warnings have had any effect?

PEHLE: We are sure that they do, although it is obviously difficult to measure their effectiveness exactly. The fact that Roumania permitted the refugees to return from Transnistria to Roumania proper may well be an example of the success of this technique. We have evidence that these warnings have injected new life and hope into thousands of downtrodden, tormented people - have been "booster shots" to sinking hearts.

BAUKHAGE: Is the work which the War Refugee Board is doing in any way duplicating the activities of private agencies such as those which are represented in the United Jewish Appeal?

PEHLE: Definitely not, Mr. Baukhage. Private agencies and the Board work as a team. Through the Board things are done that only Government can do. Private agencies meet the principal costs and assist in functional ways. We need them and they need us.

BAUKHAGE: Well, Mr. Pehle, can you tell us a little more concretely how this works out?

PEHLE: Let me tell you about Leon and Ruth, a Jewish couple whose martyrdom began when the Germans took France. For a time they hid in the outskirts of Paris and then in the surrounding country. Last winter they made their way to Spain. Their only possessions were the clothes on their backs. After making this treacherous journey they were held in custody until provision could be made for them. The Joint Distribution Committee - one of the agencies in the United Jewish Appeal - secured their freedom by guaranteeing their maintenance. Leon and Ruth are in Barcelona now. They are candidates for evacuation to a camp which the United States and Great Britain have set up near Casablanca in North Africa. The War Refugee Board is going to see that they get there - soon.

BAUKHAGE: That's fine!

PEHLE: You see, Mr. Baukhage, the agencies in the United Jewish Appeal - the Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal, and the National Refugee Service - have a very distinguished record of achievement. We want to supplement and reinforce their activities. We want to cooperate with them wherever it is appropriate. We hope that those who wish to further the program of the War Refugee Board will do it by responding generously to the campaigns of effective private agencies such as those in the United Jewish Appeal. As President Roosevelt said, through them "the American people can make their contribution to the fight for decency, human dignity, and freedom for all to live in peace."

BAUKHAGE: Now there's one more question I want to ask you, Mr. Pehle. How is the present military situation - the invasion we're all waiting for - affecting your work?

PEHLE: Mr. Baukhage, we realize that the exigencies of war may suddenly reverse or delay some of our plans. We realize that the very nature of our problem may change. But let me assure you that we are determined to save as many lives as we can, as fast as we can. We are prepared to use this Nation's growing power and our coming victory for the humane purposes for which we fight.

BAUKHAGE: Thank you very much, Mr. Pehle, for giving us this clear picture of the part the War Refugee Board is playing in helping the refugees.

DOCUMENT

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 12

(The following address by John W. Pehle,
Executive Director of the War Refugee Board,
before the Rededication Day Rally of the
United Jewish Appeal at the Hotel Astor, New
York, is scheduled for delivery at 8:30 p.m.
Eastern War Time, Monday, June 5, 1944, and
is for release at that time.)

I am very happy to be here tonight to join in the Rededication Day Rally of the United Jewish Appeal. As the conflagration in Europe blazes with new fury, it is fitting that the officers and workers in the agencies of the United Jewish Appeal should consecrate themselves anew to the task of rescuing the refugees from the clutches of the enemy.

We who are here tonight have pledged our minds and our hearts to the salvation of human lives. We are concerned with this task first as civilized men and women and second as citizens of a country which is dedicated to this task. It is one purpose in which I am convinced that all Americans, regardless of race, creed or political affiliation, join hearts and hands.

I am here tonight as a representative of the Government. Your invitation is a profession of faith in the work of the War Refugee Board. Together we are interested in getting the best possible results in our life-saving mission. You are well aware of the magnitude of that mission.

Last January President Roosevelt by executive order set up the War Refugee Board, consisting of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of War "to take action for the immediate rescue of as many as possible of the persecuted minorities of Europe - racial, religious and political." By creating the Board the President promised the hunted and oppressed that the United States would do everything in its power to help them. I think the establishment of this Board is a striking example of the American spirit. Some other nation might have fashioned such an instrument. But America did.

At the time the Board was created and, I am sorry to say, even today many millions of refugees were wandering homeless and unwanted,

hiding wherever they could, over the map of Europe. By far the greatest part of them were Jews - for Hitler has singled out the Jews for destruction. In the past four years millions of them have suffered desolation and death.

Even before the war a great many Jews were uprooted. Many thousands left Germany and Austria to escape Nazi persecution. When Hitler occupied Czechoslovakia great numbers of Czechs sought refuge in Hungary, Roumania and more distant lands. In 1939 the Nazi invasion of Poland forced another exodus. Some of the Poles went to Hungary and Roumania. More than a million are now in Russia.

In 1940 the invasion of the Low Countries and the fall of France sent more refugees on their endless march. Dutch, Belgians, and French fled before the advancing German armies into central and southwestern France. A relatively small number made their way across the Spanish border. In 1941 when the Germans went into the Balkans, a number of Yugoslavs and Greeks escaped by way of Turkey.

These movements were but a few strokes in the background of the tangled picture of helpless, homeless, stateless refugees who are scattered over Europe today - a picture painted with more shadows than light - a picture which changes with every military action.

The agencies in the United Jewish Appeal and the War Refugee Board are determined to move these desperate, hunted people to places of safety. We are determined to get as many of them out of occupied Europe as we can, as fast as we can. But until we can get them out we must use every possible means to keep them alive. We must not let the Gestapo or starvation get to them first.

I am sure you were heartened last Friday, as I was, when President Roosevelt told his press and radio conference that some of these people are coming to this country. He confirmed that consideration was being given to using an army camp no longer needed for military purposes as a temporary haven for these refugees. Tonight I am glad to tell you that plans for such a camp are going forward at full speed.

I should like to point out to you a few of the very black spots upon which our attention is focussed. One is Hungary. Since March 19 of this year Hungary has been the prey of terrorist Nazi rule. Today the situation is desperate. You have a right to know the facts, and they are terrifying facts. Altogether 800,000 Jews in Hungary face annihilation. Hungary, which had been a temporary sanctuary for many refugees from Poland and other countries before the Nazi took over, has become a murder chamber overnight. There is no use to gloss over the cold-blooded massacre that is taking place there. We are reliably informed that negotiations are already being concluded for deportation to Eland and to death of

300,000 Jews who have been in concentration camps in Hungary since the German occupation. A sudden military development is the only possible way all of these people could be saved. There is little that we can do, but we are determined to do everything we can - and each small bit represents hundreds of human lives.

Reports had reached us that efforts were afoot in German-occupied Italy to raise the anti-Jewish campaign there to the same level of intensity as in Hungary. We can all thank God that the liberation of Rome by our gallant troops has signaled the end of Nazi oppression in that great city of Europe.

There are at least 5,000 children who must be rescued from occupied France and an equal number of children whose future depends upon our getting them out of Bulgaria.

These are but a random sample of our problems. There are many others in Yugoslavia, Slovakia and elsewhere - equally pressing.

What we must understand is that the immediate rescue job is up to us. That means it is up to effective private agencies and the War Refugee Board - to you and me and what we stand for. Upon us rests the responsibility for carrying out the desires of the American people to preserve human decency, human dignity and human lives.

Much of the War Refugee Board's work is done through diplomatic channels, with the assistance of the State Department and its foreign representatives. In this connection I cannot praise too highly the unremitting and wholehearted efforts not only of Ira Hirschmann, our able representative who is returning to Ankara, but also of Ambassador Steinhardt in Turkey. Mr. Steinhardt's active and resourceful cooperation has made us all grateful that he is our Ambassador in Turkey at this crucial time.

Back in January the little trickle of refugees who had been coming to Turkey from the Balkans had virtually ceased. However, the possibility of rescuing larger and larger numbers of persons existed although a hundred obstacles stood in the way. We have made real progress in overcoming these obstacles and more than a thousand lives were saved during the month of April alone. There is good reason to hope that the way is now paved for further success in saving lives in this area.

I have said we must do our utmost to keep those whose lives are in danger alive. In this connection I want to give you an idea of what is being done on the psychological front. I want to tell you, for example, what our Government is doing in an attempt to thwart the Gestapo in Hungary.

Through the radio facilities of the Office of War Information,

the British Broadcasting Company and Radio Algiers the Voice of America has been beamed steadily at Hungary since March 24 in Hungarian language short wave broadcasts. March 24, you will remember, was the day of the President's warning to Germany and the satellites of the consequences of further persecution of the Jews and other minorities. That statement calling upon the free peoples of Europe and Asia "to open their frontiers to all victims of oppression" was the keynote of countless radio programs. It was followed up by messages from Secretary Hull, various Senators and leading Catholic churchmen of Hungarian extraction.

The Hungarian people have been called upon to save their Jewish brothers, to hide them, to nourish them, to help them reach Yugoslav territory where American military commissions are functioning. They have been reminded of the Declaration of Moscow - warned that those who have been responsible for or have taken part in atrocities, massacres or executions will be punished.

They have been told specifically how the French underground has aided Jewish refugees in France. They have been urged to emulate the Greeks who in their humanity spontaneously assisted 15,000 of their neighbors - Jews - to hide and remain hidden.

The Hungarians have been told exactly how to preserve evidence against the war criminals - to note the names of all who take part in the persecution and crimes of the Nazis, to take photographs of what they can, and to take care to preserve these incriminating documents.

And, finally, they have had dinned into their ears that the Nazi star is sinking - that it is now clear to everyone, even to the Nazis themselves, that they are losing the war on the sea, in the air, in the South, in Russia, and that they will soon be defeated finally and irrevocably.

I have been asked if the work of the War Refugee Board in any way duplicates the activities of private agencies such as those which are represented in the United Jewish Appeal. The answer is definitely - NO. Our rescue work in Turkey is an example of the way private agencies and the Board supplement each other's work. Through the Board things are done that only Government can do. Private agencies have met the principal costs of transporting the refugees from Roumania to Palestine and in many other ways. The Board and private agencies also have teamed up effectively on the relief and rescue programs which are now in operation in Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. The neutral countries contiguous to enemy-held territory will be in a position to receive larger numbers of refugees if facilities for additional imports of clothing and foodstuffs are granted. The Board is working to obtain those definitive assurances which will make it possible for private agencies to step up their relief work.

I should like to cite just one more example of cooperative endeavor. Upon the Board's recommendation the Treasury Department has issued licenses which permit the JDC and other agencies to send money to representatives abroad to purchase food for individual parcels to be distributed to internees in enemy territory, and for other purposes.

We want to expand and accelerate the helpfulness of private agencies such as those in the United Jewish Appeal. We need them and they need us. We have not and we do not intend to set up a large governmental organization. On our staff are twenty-five professional employees, vitally concerned with the work they are - doing.

The agencies in the United Jewish Appeal - and the Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal, and the National Refugee Service - have been in business a long time. They have a distinguished record of humanitarian achievement. They have developed well-tested machinery for rescuing and maintaining refugees. It is for us to supplement and reinforce their activities through diplomatic and other channels available to the Government.

The War Refugee Board is an emergency organization set up to do an emergency job. We can do that job best by working fully through private agencies. Together we have made only a beginning. Much more must be done. As long as one life is sacrificed that might have been spared whatever we do is not enough.

As I have indicated, one of the voluntary agencies which has been of immense value to the Board is the Joint Distribution Committee - the largest wholly private agency operating overseas. Its experience is invaluable and its personnel and financial assistance have contributed greatly to the progress of our work. Just as we have been happy to help enlarge the opportunities for rescue through the JDC, we are also interested in cooperating wherever it is appropriate with the other agencies in the United Jewish Appeal, namely, the United Palestine Appeal and the National Refugee Service. Their record of concrete achievement is encouraging to everyone interested in winning reprieves for those people who are under the Nazi yoke.

You who are here tonight are the workers in the New York City and Metropolitan Area for the War Emergency Campaign of the United Jewish Appeal. You have set your sights high. You are taking time from your families, your businesses and your private affairs to raise your share of the \$32 million which the United Jewish Appeal needs to do its work. You would be more than human if you did not have moments of doubt - moments when you wondered what was happening to the money you have obtained, moments when you wondered if the personal sacrifices you are making are worth while. From my vantage point let me assure you that they are. Let me also assure you that no time is being lost in converting your dollars into

programs of relief and rescue. Those dollars are making the difference between life and death, between hope and despair to countless human beings.

In creating a War Refugee Board President Roosevelt paved the way for a great service to the cause of freedom and humanity. To millions of tormented people whose lives were in peril he gave hope. It is for us to justify that hope. I am not satisfied with what we have done. I don't ever expect to be. Nor do I think you will be satisfied with even the most you can do. Our only satisfaction must be derived from judging ourselves in terms of how much has been done that could be done.

Tonight we have met to rededicate ourselves to the great task remaining before us. Tonight we highly resolve that those millions who died in the ghettos and in the boxcars and on the highways shall not have died in vain. Tonight we pledge ourselves and our resources to those who yet live. With this determination we face the task ahead.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 13

(Statement by John W. Pehle, Executive Director
of the War Refugee Board, to be released on ar-
rival of the refugees.)

The arrival of almost 1,000 refugees from Italy today demon-
strates this Nation's willingness to participate in an inter-
national program to find havens for the survivors of Nazi persecu-
tion.

In accordance with the terms laid down by President Roosevelt
they will be housed and cared for at Fort Ontario, under adequate
security precautions, until the war is over and they can return to
their homes.

The sanctuary America offers this small group is but one as-
pect of the War Refugee Board's program to rescue and protect the
persecuted peoples of Europe.

The refugees who landed here today are safe and they are
welcome.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING NEWSPAPERS
Tuesday, August 22, 1944.

RELEASE NO. 13A

Details of the midnight attack and subsequent sinking in the Black Sea of the S. S. Mefkura, 200-ton Turkish motor ship carrying refugees from Constanza, Roumania, to Turkey were revealed today by John W. Pehle, executive director of the War Refugee Board.

Reports from the five survivors indicate that the ill-fated Mefkura went down under German shell fire. More than 250 passengers perished.

"If anyone had any doubts about the German attitude toward refugee rescue operations, or anticipated a lessening in the Nazi program of extermination, he now knows the ugly truth," Mr. Pehle declared.

According to a cable received by Mr. Pehle from Ira Hirschmann, War Refugee Board representative in Turkey, survivors of the Mefkura stated that the ship was approached by three surface craft near midnight August 5. The boats were barges, about the length of two railroad cars, and armed with machine guns and cannons. The boats fired both cannons and machine guns at the Mefkura. One of the first shots exploded the machinery in the machine room and the ship was set afire by incendiary bullets.

The survivors said that many of their number were wounded by shell fire; others were caught in the flames or injured by flying machinery. The machine guns continued to fire upon many of the passengers after they had donned life preservers and jumped into the water.

The five Mefkura survivors and 395 passengers from the S. S. Bulbul, which made the trip a few hours behind the Mefkura, are now en route to Palestine by rail, Mr. Pehle said. The Bulbul passengers reported that their ship was not on the scene during the attack on the Mefkura. Later the armed boats approached the Bulbul and its engines were shut down. At daylight it picked up the five Mefkura survivors, who were all that could be found. A storm was raging, otherwise it was thought that more might have been rescued. For some reason, the armed boats did not fire upon the Bulbul, which continued its voyage carrying the Mefkura survivors to Igneda, Turkey.

Mr. Pehle stated that the emergency rescue operation which included bringing both the Mefkura survivors and the Bulbul passengers by oxcart from Ignaeda to Vize, by truck to Cherkaskoy, and by train to Istanbul, was conducted under the supervision of the Turkish Red Crescent.

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 14

(The following address by SECRETARY MORGENTHAU, a member of the War Refugee Board, before a mass meeting of the Jewish Welfare Fund to inaugurate the campaign of the Community and War Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, at the Stevens Hotel, is scheduled for delivery at 9:00 P.M., Central War Time, Thursday, September 21, 1944, and is for release at that time.)

A readiness to help one's fellow-men has always been a hallmark of the kind of civilization which we are now waging war to preserve. Never has there been more urgent need for it than now when the end of the war is approaching. For we shall be able to make our victory real only if we succeed in binding up the world's wounds, only if we can relieve and heal the terrible suffering which the war has caused.

This special meeting of the Jewish Welfare Fund is designed to encourage the Jewish community of Chicago to give its generous support to the Community and War Fund of the Metropolitan area. The Jews of Europe, who have suffered so terribly from Nazi savagery have special need of your help. It will be heartening to them to know that in this community, far away from the turmoil and destruction of the war, Jews and non-Jews together are striving to assist them.

All of you who share in this great effort have cause for gratification. There is something lost, I think, if men are deprived of the privilege of lending, voluntarily, a helping hand to their fellow-men and to the causes in which they believe. In a democracy there must always be room for the voluntary participation of individuals banding together to meet the problems of society. Charity, like mercy, is twice blessed. "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Fund raising efforts such as the one which you are now undertaking do more than anything else to give us a sense of human solidarity. Their benefits, when they are directed to needs at home, do much to improve the morale and physical well-being of our people and thus make our country stronger - in peace as well as in war. When these benefits are directed overseas, they help to preserve the concepts for which we are fighting - human decency and dignity. They keep alive the values of our civilization.

Private agencies, such as those that make up the United Jewish Appeal, administering funds voluntarily contributed, have for many years been carrying on important programs overseas, furnishing rescue, relief and encouragement to millions of persecuted and impoverished people in Europe. We know that these activities have done much to bolster their will to live and to carry on. Refugees coming out of Nazi-dominated territory have testified that it has been a source of great strength to them to know that America cares about what happens to them - and cares enough to do something constructive in their behalf.

My conviction in this regard has been strengthened by the whole of my experience with the War Refugee Board, established eight months ago through the vision and humanitarianism of President Roosevelt. It is my privilege to share membership on the Board with Secretary Hull and Secretary Stimson, and to serve with its Executive Director, John W. Pehle.

In creating the War Refugee Board, the President declared: "It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war."

With a small staff in Washington, with a handful of able representatives in strategic neutral countries, the Board has carried on a host of activities in relief, in rescue, and in psychological warfare - all designed to save the lives of persecuted peoples.

Life-saving in an occupied country during a war is not a simple matter. All over Europe the Board has carried on its work with the great care necessary in such complex operations. It has participated in the rescue of thousands from the Balkans across the Black Sea to Palestine - in the rescue of many over the Pyrenees to and through Spain and Portugal - in the relief of many weary victims of Hitler's persecution who had found sanctuary in Sweden and Switzerland. It has cooperated in establishing many refugee camps in Africa and, through the President's leadership, an Emergency Refugee Shelter at Oswego, in the United States. It has taken the lead in sending food packages from this country to helpless internees in European camps. In the Hungarian crisis it took many steps which undoubtedly helped stay the deportation of Jews and relieve their condition. It has used all the old techniques and invented some new ones. It has applied them all to the saving of human life.

In all its operations, the Board has worked in the closest cooperation with private agencies. Many of its programs in relief and rescue work have utilized the personnel, the funds and the ex-

perience of those private agencies in which you are particularly interested and which you are supporting. In addition, it has had the warmest sort of support and assistance from numerous non-Jewish organizations - the American Friends' Service Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee, the International Committee of the Red Cross and many others.

The rescue operations from the Balkans were actually carried on by the Jewish Agency of Palestine and the Joint Distribution Committee. Part of the expense of feeding persons in Hungary and other occupied countries has been met by JDC. Without the help of such agencies these activities might have been "too little and too late."

Some of you may wonder why the work of the War Refugee Board has not been carried on and financed exclusively by the Government. Let me explain why I think it better that it was done jointly by both private agencies and the Government.

When the Board was first established, it was obvious that speed was essential. Millions of unfortunate people were in danger of sudden violent death or deportation. The pace of the war indicated that sudden military and diplomatic moves were impending. There was the terrible prospect that in the last days of his control, Hitler would suddenly undertake new measures of persecution and extermination. It was imperative that speedy machinery be employed.

In the light of this situation, the Board decided to rule out, wherever possible, all plans and devices that involved undue delay. It was quickly apparent that there were honorable, seasoned private organizations in this field who were equipped with everything except the kind of support which could come only from the Government of the United States. The main ingredient that was lacking was a vigorous statement of policy by this Government, and its application in all possible ways.

It seemed perfectly logical that a relationship should be established between the private agencies and the Government in order that the maximum number of lives should be saved in the minimum time. For its part the Government could contribute the weight of its prestige, its diplomacy, its communication channels, its licensing and transportation facilities - wherever these did not interfere with the winning of the war. For their part the private agencies could give detailed knowledge, seasoned personnel, long experience, and quickly available funds.

A partnership was speedily arranged. War Refugee Board originated, expedited, negotiated and enabled; private agencies did most of the financing and operating, and attended to those practical matters in which they were experienced.

It is impossible, in my judgment, to pay too high a tribute to the work done by the organizations represented here this evening. There has been no call made upon them by the War Refugee Board which they did not answer with ardor and generosity. There has been no appeal from the beleaguered humans in Hitler's European dungeon to which they did not respond with zeal and vigor and compassion. They operated under terrible handicaps and against terrible odds. Yet they managed to pluck condemned men from the hands of executioners. They managed to bring children - youngsters whose whole lives had been spent in the shadow of persecution - into the light of freedom and opportunity and hope. They did more than save lives. They upheld the faith of mankind in the essential values upon which our civilization is founded.

With the liberation of Europe, there will be an even more compelling need for these services. The activities of the War Refugee Board are war-related and are confined primarily to the rescue of refugees from enemy countries. When the oppressors have been overthrown, the liberated peoples will be in desperate need of sustenance and encouragement. Beyond the help which will be given to them by the military authorities, UNRRA and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees there will be a great need for the kind of care which only voluntary agencies can provide.

In Rome today, for example, the JDC is ministering to the needs of desperate and broken remnants of the Jewish population. There is special need of food and medical care for these persecuted people. And the situation there will unquestionably be duplicated in France, in Belgium, in Holland, in Poland, in Hungary, in all the lands where the oppressor's heel has trod. Liberation will simply multiply your opportunities to be of service. It would be tragic to desert the great cause now. For the task which you are called upon to support is indispensable to the creation of the kind of world in which we hope to live.

All of you, I know, have read with shame and anger and heart-break the tales of Nazi savagery which have been unfolded as the liberation of Europe has progressed. No human being, least of all an American who has been brought up to respect freedom and the sanctity of the individual, could learn of these acts without a shuddering anguish. They are, to most of us, in a real sense incredible; and it is incredible that they should have been perpetrated by creatures shaped like men. Yet the record of what took place at Warsaw and Lublin and Kharkov, the bestial cruelty of the Gestapo in Germany and in all the lands which Germans overran, is real past all denying. I shall not try to tell you any of these tales. I know that your minds and hearts already have been seared by them.

We who have been spared these horrors have a solemn obligation to those who experienced them - an obligation imposed upon us by our

common humanity. We have an obligation to those millions whom the war will have left homeless and hungry, uprooted and driven to distant places, bereft of any means to start their lives anew. We cannot turn our heads aside and look the other way. The basic tenet of the civilization we cherish is that a kinship exists among all men.

DOCUMENT

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 15

(The following address by John W. Pehle,
Executive Director of the War Refugee Board,
before a dinner meeting of the Combined
Jewish Appeal, at the Statler Hotel, Boston,
is scheduled for delivery at 8 p.m. Eastern
War Time, Sunday, October 15, 1944, and is
for release at that time.)

Tonight I want to tell you something about the rescue program which the War Refugee Board has been carrying on for the past eight months with the help of the voluntary philanthropic agencies of America, the governments of the neutral countries, the underground of Europe, and men of good will everywhere. I cannot blueprint all the details of that program, but I can give you some examples taken from the files of the War Refugee Board of the work that has gone ahead. And these illustrations bear witness to the practical and ingenious humanitarianism of the American people, during the grimmest war in all history.

In Gothenburg, Sweden, 15,000 food parcels from America were recently unloaded -- destined for helpless inmates of internment camps . . . 285,000 more parcels are now on their way.

In a Balkan country a humanitarian volunteer arrives equipped with sufficient status, prestige and funds to aid the victims of enemy persecution . . . His first act is to furnish a shelter for Jewish refugees . . . He is currently using private funds that originated in America to provide food - especially for children.

Of many couriers who have entered the Baltic countries to rescue refugees, some have been reported missing immediately after their arrival and others have even lost their lives in the effort.

Over the Pyrenees groups of children tortuously made their escape from France, prior to its liberation, to Spain, with the blessing of the Maquis, and with the aid of guides paid by funds from America . . . A few weeks later some are on their way to Palestine.

Along the Black Sea coast of Rumania small ships gather groups of refugees for a hazardous trip to Turkey . . . In Turkey, two Americans persuade local authorities to cut red tape and to permit

refugees arriving on foot and in small boats to cross the country on their way from the Balkans to Palestine.

In a neutral country a prominent personage writes a personal letter in longhand for delivery to Horthy, asking that there be a stop to the deportation and extermination of Jews from Hungary . . . As a result of this and other protests, the British and American governments accepted the offer of the Hungarian government to release Jews and agreed to care for those reaching United Nations or neutral territories.

All over Europe listeners to secret radios hear statements of protest and warning against persecution of Jews issued by President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Hull, and two Congressional committees of the United States . . . Pamphlets drop over Hungary warning of retribution for her inhuman conduct.

In Southern Italy an American helps arrange for the escape in fragile ships of the downtrodden from Yugoslavia across the Adriatic to Italy . . . Some of those escaping later appear in African refugee camps and in an American Refugee Shelter.

In a camp at Casablanca several hundred wandering Sephardics at last find a temporary haven . . .

In upper New York State an American soldier visits his parents who, with almost 1,000 others have been brought to Oswego.

In Lisbon a committee meets to facilitate the departure of refugees who have come from France . . . Some arrive in Palestine . . . Some in Canada.

In London high government officials, American and British, join officers of an international organization to expedite the rescue of refugees.

In Poland, as in other occupied countries in Europe, underground groups protect exposed refugees by hiding them, by disguising them, by moving them from place to place.

These items constitute part of the story of the current war effort. America has been using every imaginable device to contest the enemy's barbaric determination to wipe out complete sections of the world's non-combatant population.

This is not idle rhetoric. There can be no doubt that Hitler and his partners in barbarism have a deliberate plan to exterminate entire segments of the population of Europe, including particularly the Jews.

This effort, as we know from the evidence at Lublin and Kharkov

and from much unpublished material, has not been confined to the Jews. In obvious preparation for another war, the Germans have killed large numbers of non-Jewish intellectual and cultural leaders of Poland. Huge segments of the Russian civilian population have been slaughtered. Entire groups in all the other occupied countries have fallen under the crushing heel of Hitler and his followers.

And there have been tens of thousands of individuals who have been selected for death simply because they kept on being themselves - which meant being an anti-Nazi preacher, a true democrat, a courageous patriot, an honest journalist, or a humane citizen.

We have been shocked to the extreme by this war of extermination. The barbarity of the enemy has aroused the conscience of America. It has mobilized our sympathies, and it has inspired the Government of the United States to do all that can be done to rescue the intended victims of enemy slaughter.

Specifically, this revulsion in America has expressed itself in the creation of the War Refugee Board by President Roosevelt. It has been my privilege to serve as Executive Director of this Board, the members of which are Secretary Hull, Secretary Morgenthau, and Secretary Stimson.

In creating the War Refugee Board the President declared: "It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war."

The creation of the Board and the statement of this goal are landmarks in the humanitarian history of America. The Government of the United States issued a solemn statement of policy in behalf of refugees, and it asked three members of the Cabinet to take all feasible steps to implement that policy.

As a result of my service with the Board, I have come to appreciate more than ever some typically American qualities in their true magnificence. I have learned that Americans are capable of heartfelt indignation when barbarities are committed during the course of a war. And I have learned that our American way permits indignation to be translated into action - in time of war no less than in times of peace.

Without the widespread and insistent public interest in the perilous condition of European refugees, it would have been most difficult to establish the Board and to carry on its operations. Many of those who have been saved from Europe's deathtraps owe their lives to American sympathy and American effort.

There is evidence that the oppressed and endangered peoples of Europe are keenly aware of America's interest and America's activities. Ira A. Hirschmann, War Refugee Board representative in Ankara, has told us of a recent incident that illustrates this awareness.

Following the recent break in relations between Turkey and Germany, a number of individual Germans, Austrians and Czechs, known to be anti-Nazi, found themselves under a threat of expulsion from Turkey because they were technically Germans in the eyes of the Turkish authorities. Some approached the War Refugee Board representative for aid. They received it and I am happy to say that the Turkish Government has dealt sympathetically with these cases. One of them was a woman who had lived in Turkey for 12 years and who was accompanied by a one-year old child. When asked why she had come to the United States officials, she replied: "Where else should I go? It seemed only natural to come here. Who else really cares?"

Another typically American institution whose importance has emerged clearer than ever is the voluntary philanthropic agency. A quick and effective program of the War Refugee Board was made possible by generous contributions of suggestions, personnel, and funds by private agencies that had already existed in the field of international rescue and relief work.

I want to pay my unqualified respects to these agencies for their generous support. As matters have developed, the War Refugee Board has served as a central enabling and expediting body for all agencies - Jewish and non-Jewish, new and old, reform and orthodox, soft-spoken and outspoken.

To catalog these agencies would be impossible. But I want to mention a few. The constituent agencies of the United Jewish Appeal - the United Palestine Appeal, the National Refugee Service, and particularly the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee - have contributed most of the funds that have carried on rescue and relief programs. Funds, ideas and unstinted cooperation have also come in varying amounts from other agencies, such as the World Jewish Congress and HIAS.

It is the purpose of the War Refugee Board to strengthen agencies like these by giving them the support of a clear-cut statement of sympathetic policy by this government and by using the diplomatic, licensing and communication facilities of the government to help them achieve their welfare ends.

I also want to pay tribute to many non-Jewish groups and individuals who have shown a true Christian spirit in their quick and friendly reaction in support of the helpless of Europe. This help has come from both Protestant and Catholic organizations. The

American Friends Service Committee and the Unitarian Service Committee have made important contributions, as have other Protestant groups.

The record of the Catholic Church in this regard has been inspiring. All over Europe, Catholic priests have furnished hiding places and protection to the persecuted. His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, has interceded on many occasions in behalf of refugees in danger.

In this country, too, we have received help from Catholic leaders. At a most critical point in the Hungarian situation, Archbishop Spellman wrote a truly impressive supplication to the Catholics of that country to protect and help the Jews. This moving statement was broadcast in Hungarian, and reprints of it were dropped over Hungary.

Of great assistance, too, was a statement of protest against Hungarian atrocities prepared by the late Alfred E. Smith in conjunction with over 100 other non-Jewish leaders.

The net result of all the efforts I have mentioned has been a significant contribution in the rescue of helpless human beings. It is difficult to measure the results of the Board's efforts in figures. Actually thousands of persons were rescued from enemy territory. There is reason to believe that several hundreds of thousands escaped death in the occupied countries as the result of the psychological and diplomatic efforts of the Board.

Thus, in the American tradition, as the result of a partnership between private groups and a government agency, there has been affirmed - in word and in action - the principle of human fellowship.

In the matter of philanthropic effort, there is danger in confining ourselves to the recent past or to the present. The instruments of humanitarianism must be plastic. They must be fashioned for use in the challenging new days that lie ahead - days of liberation, days of peace, days of reconstruction.

We know from recent experience in Italy, in France, and in Belgium that there is a prodigious task ahead in the field of post-liberation relief and rehabilitation. We know, also, that UNRRA and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees have staked out certain areas of activity, and are hard at work. But we also know that important functions are even today being performed by voluntary agencies. And we have reason to believe that private groups will continue to play an important role. It is most important that voluntary agencies be supported fully during the period that lies before us.

This war has brought untold suffering and sorrow to the people of the world. It has been particularly severe on the Jewish population, which has been reduced nearly one-third by the atrocities of Hitler. Jews and Christians alike have shed dry, bitter tears at the unspeakable atrocities committed on the body and mind of man. The time for tears is almost over. The time for constructive action is near. Determined men and women must soon pick up the pieces of our civilization, reassemble them, and move forward into a world of peace, where human dignity and the brotherhood of man may once more prevail.

DOCUMENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

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Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE MORNING PAPERS
Wednesday, October 25, 1944

RELEASE NO. 16

On Monday, October 23, in a speech at Denver, Colorado, Governor Bricker of Ohio assailed the action of President Roosevelt in providing temporary haven in the United States for the duration of the war for approximately 1,000 refugees from Italy. These are the refugees who were brought to the United States in August, 1944, and are located at the Emergency Refugee Shelter, Oswego, New York. The majority are women and children.

Following Governor Bricker's statement, the War Refugee Board has received numerous inquiries from the press as to whether Governor Bricker joined in the appeal to the President in May, 1944, by the late Alfred E. Smith urging the establishment of temporary refugee havens in the United States. There follows the full text of the appeal and a complete list of its signers, as transmitted to the Board on May 26, 1944, by Governor Smith:

"The civilized world is appalled by the news of new criminal plans of Hitler and his puppets to exterminate the innocent and helpless minorities that have lately fallen into their hands. In Hungary alone nearly a million lives hang in the balance. Men, women and children, who have committed no recognized crime but whose only offense is an ancient lineage and a high moral code hated by the Nazis, are being herded into concentration camps. There, in defiance of all the laws of Christian civilization, they are about to be exterminated.

"As citizens of a free nation and as believers in the doctrine of the sanctity of human life, we cannot remain silent while those shocking crimes are being committed, but are forced by our deepest convictions to protest against the Nazi barbarities.

"We call upon the Governments of the United States and all the Allied Nations to repeat their warnings to the Nazis and their satellites that no person who participates in crimes against the Jews and other minorities shall escape punishment. We urge the Allied Governments to speak directly to the people of the satellite countries through all the broadcasting facilities owned by the United Nations

and to warn their puppet officials and other collaborators through neutral diplomatic channels that the end of the war will bring swift retribution upon all those guilty of atrocities.

"Furthermore, it is our belief that the people marked for death must be informed that they have friends among the free nations of the world. By word and by concrete act, the American people and their allies must let them know that there are hearts that understand their sufferings and hands that are eager to help them. If they are convinced that the free and democratic peoples recognize them as brothers under God, it will give them hope and the courage to use every means within reach to escape Hitler's torture chambers and death traps.

"For those reasons we endorse the idea of establishing in this country temporary havens of refuge for those who are brought out of Europe by the War Refugee Board. It is a moral obligation of the United States and all other freedom-loving nations to erect temporary havens where the refugees may find sanctuary until conditions in their native lands enable them to return and take up their lives in the atmosphere of respect and decency and charity that our certain victory will create.

(Signed)

Alfred E. Smith
Chauncey Sparks, Governor of Alabama
Sidney P. Osborn, Governor of Arizona
John C. Vivian, Governor of Colorado
Spessard L. Holland, Governor of Florida
C. A. Bottolfsen, Governor of Idaho
Henry F. Schricker, Governor of Indiana
Simeon Willis, Governor of Kentucky
Herbert R. O'Conor, Governor of Maryland
Thomas L. Bailey, Governor of Mississippi
Robert E. Blood, Governor of New Hampshire
Walter E. Edge, Governor of New Jersey
J. M. Broughton, Governor of North Carolina
John W. Bricker, Governor of Ohio
J. Howard McGrath, Governor of Rhode Island
Olin D. Johnston, Governor of South Carolina
M. Q. Shurpe, Governor of South Dakota
Matthew M. Neely, Governor of West Virginia
L. C. Hunt, Governor of Wyoming
Charles G. Dawes, former Vice-President of the United States
Frank Murphy, Associate Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court
Robert F. Wagner, U. S. Senator from New York

James A. Farley, former U. S. Postmaster General
Owen D. Young, chairman of the General Electric Company
Judge John P. McGorty, of Chicago, Illinois
Frank S. Hogan, District Attorney of New York County
Basil O'Connor, of New York City, former law partner of
President Roosevelt
Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University
and co-winner of the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize
Dr. Irving Langmuir, of Schenectady, N. Y., winner of the
1932 Nobel Prize in Chemistry
Dr. Robert A. Millikan, of Pasadena, Calif., winner of the
1923 Nobel Prize in Physics
Dr. George R. Minot, of Brookline, Mass., co-winner of the
1934 Nobel Prize in Medicine
Dr. Harry Woodburn Chase, Chancellor of New York University
George N. Shuster, President of Hunter College
Harry N. Wright, President of the College of the City of
New York
Frank P. Graham, President of the University of North
Carolina
Robert G. Sproul, President of the University of
California
William P. Tolley, Chancellor of Syracuse University
Raymond R. Paty, President of the University of Alabama
Homer P. Rainey, President of the University of Texas
R. B. Von Kleinsmid, President of the University of
Southern California
Very Rev. N. J. O'Connell, President of De Paul University
F. C. Bolton, President of Agricultural and Mechanical
College of Texas
L. N. Duncan, President of Alabama Polytechnic Institute
John L. Mahan, President of Our Lady of Lake College,
San Antonio, Texas
Prof. Eugene E. Syrus, of Columbia University
Prof. Harry J. Carman, of Columbia University
Prof. Helen G. White, of the University of Wisconsin
Thomas H. Lehner, Chairman of the National Dairy Products
Corp.
Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary, Federal Council
of the Churches of Christ in America
James S. Adams, President of Standard Brands
Robert Gaynor, President of the National Association of
Manufacturers
A. T. Mercier, of Chicago, Ill., President of the Southern
Pacific Railroad Company
J. C. Hanes, of Tulsa, Okla., President of the Oklahoma
Power & Water Company
P. C. Lauinger, of Tulsa, Okla., publisher
William Green, President, American Federation of Labor
James B. Carey, Secretary of the CIO

Samuel Seabury, New York
Edward Skillin, Jr., New York, Editor of the Commonwealth
Quentin Reynolds, war correspondent and author
William Rose Benet, New York, poet and editor
Edna St. Vincent Millay, Poet
Margaret Culkin Banning, Duluth, Minn., novelist
John B. Collins, editor of The Pittsburgh Catholic
Maurice F. Donegan, former Chief Justice of the Supreme
Court of Iowa
Martin Quigley, New York City, editor
Daniel Mahoney, Miami, Fla.
Leo Considine, Oklahoma City, Okla.
Andrew T. Healy, Miami, Fla.
Thomas F. McDonald, St. Louis, Mo., attorney
James J. Moore, New York City
Andrew F. Burke, San Francisco, Calif.
George W. Strake, Houston, Texas"

DOCUMENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

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Executive Office of the President

Washington

FOR RELEASE, MORNING NEWSPAPERS,
Sunday, January 28, 1945.

Release No. 17

The War Refugee Board announced today that John W. Pehle has resigned as Executive Director of the Board. The Board made public Mr. Pehle's letter of resignation and the Board's acceptance (copies attached).

Mr. Pehle was designated Acting Executive Director of the Board shortly after its creation on January 22, 1944. Later, on March 24, 1944, the Board, with the approval of the President, designated him permanent Executive Director.

As explained in the letter of resignation, Mr. Pehle resigned because of the increasing burden of new duties which have been assigned to him as Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury.

At the same time the Board announced the selection of Brigadier-General William O'Dwyer as the new Executive Director. General O'Dwyer is being returned to inactive status by the War Department to handle this assignment. General O'Dwyer is District Attorney for Kings County, New York, on leave, and recently returned to the United States from Italy where he served as Vice President of the Economic Section of the Allied Control Commission for Italy, with the personal rank of Minister.

January 27, 1945

MEMORANDUM TO THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD

I hereby submit to you my resignation as Executive Director of the War Refugee Board effective immediately. As Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury there has recently been assigned to me the supervision of the operations of the Treasury Procurement Division, which includes the difficult task of disposing of the surplus consumer goods turned over to the Treasury Department by the Army and the Navy. In view of the increasingly heavy burdens imposed on me by this new assignment, I have found it necessary to resign as Executive Director.

It has given me deep personal satisfaction to have been a part of the vital work undertaken by this Government to save and protect the innocent victims of Nazi persecution. While many lives have been saved as the result of our efforts, we have not, of course, met with complete success. However, I am proud of our achievements in the face of the difficulties encountered.

I have been reluctant to take this action and leave the Board because of the important work which remains to be done. I no longer have this reluctance, however, in view of Brigadier-General William O'Dwyer's willingness to assume the responsibilities of Executive Director.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

Executive Director

January 27, 1945

MEMORANDUM TO JOHN W. PEHLE

We have received your letter of resignation dated January 27, 1945.

In view of your request and the pressure of your other duties, your resignation is hereby accepted. The Board appreciates the services you have rendered and your devotion to the great and important task assigned to this Board by the President.

(s) Joseph C. Grew
Acting Secretary of State

(s) H. Morgenthau, Jr.
Secretary of the Treasury

(s) Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War

MEMORANDUM TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM O'DWYER

You are hereby appointed Executive Director of the War Refugees Board effective immediately.

We are sure we can rely on you to carry on the important task assigned to this Board by the President.

(s) Joseph C. Grew
Acting Secretary of State

(s) H. Morgenthau, Jr.
Secretary of the Treasury

(s) Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War

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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

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Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 18

(The following address by William O'Dwyer, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, before the opening meeting of the 1945 campaign of the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles, at the Hotel Ambassador, Los Angeles, is scheduled for delivery at 9 p.m. Pacific War Time, Tuesday, May 1, 1945, and is for release at that time.)

It is a high privilege for me to be here tonight to help the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles raise the funds required for its 1945 programs. I hesitated before accepting your invitation, because of the great responsibility that it entailed, but I felt that it was my duty to present to you, no matter how inadequate my words may be for this occasion, the immensity of the needs of the 1,000,000 Jews saved from the enemy since 1939. I am in a position to know that it is largely through your generosity, and of the Jews throughout America, that so many were saved.

I am deeply appreciative of the fact that funds are needed for the relief of Jews now in countries other than Europe. When the war actually began in 1939, more than 800,000 Jews had already been rescued from the grip of the Nazis and removed to safety. They have had time to take root in the countries of their adoption and today do not present problems of emergency proportions. It was a good thing that Palestine absorbed more than 300,000 of these people and provided them with the opportunity to become self-respecting human beings.

The emergency for 1945 is created by the million Jews saved since 1939 and now in Europe, broken down in body and spirit who are in dire need of special and immediate care.

During the last several war years, the emphasis, in the appeals that have been made to you, has been placed on the work of rescue from enemy control. The time has come when, thanks to our armies and thanks to everyone who has aided in the complete victory over the enemy, this work of rescue is coming to an end. The emphasis tonight must be directed to the task of keeping alive and rehabilitating the saved people.

In order for us to realize the emergency character and immediate need of the one million Jews in Europe saved since 1939, we must fully understand what they have gone through. Twelve years ago there were 6 million

Jews in Europe, outside of Russia, living with their families in reasonable security and happiness. They had their work and family problems just as you and I. Then suddenly out of the depths of human depravity an evil force struck with unprecedented ferocity at these 6 million defenseless men, women and children. The greatest military force the world had heretofore seen, a vast scientific knowledge, and the methodical German mind were directed towards the complete extermination of these people. At least 5 million Jews were destroyed and turned into fertilizer for enemy soil, and there remain today one million Jews in Europe, alive.

For years, these survivors have lived through torments and agonies that our minds cannot comprehend. Some of them were born in cages and do not yet know that there are in this world people of great hearts and generosity, who are ready to bring to them oil for their wounds, food and clothing for their bodies, shelter from the cold, solace for their souls, and hope for the future.

These helpless ones who, up to now have attracted the sympathy of the humane world, must not be forgotten in the joy of our imminent complete victory over the common enemy in Europe.

Let us go back to that evil day, 12 years ago, when Hitler and his gang pinpointed their attack on the Jews within Germany. That attack, it is now recognized by all, was deliberately planned and executed and the beginning of the more general attack against the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

In the first phase, the Nazis successively took away the property of their Jewish victims, denationalized them and forced them into slave labor. In the second phase, coming to a peak in 1943, they used the process of extermination camps, gas chambers and crematoria.

You must remember that during all these 12 years, the survivors of this holocaust have lived through every bit of that Nazi program, down to the days when they saw their friends walk into the gas chambers and their ashes taken out of the crematoria in buckets. There was never a day in the last 3 or 4 years when these agonized people did not feel that each day was their last on this earth, alive.

The agencies that are asking for your support tonight saw the impending doom of the Jews of Europe years ago and they arose to the occasion. The steps they took to save these people can not be told in the short time at my disposal.

As country after country in Europe was overrun by the German military machine, private agencies brought out as many as possible to safety. Up to October, 1941, it was still possible, in some cases, to obtain legal exit from German-occupied countries but in that month, legal exit was stopped by express German command. From that time on no Jew within the

German lines had any hope of escape, except through the underground and resistance movements.

These underground and resistance groups had to be financed and your agencies took care of that. Heroic men and women of the underground accepted their dangerous mission with outstanding stoicism and energy. The leaders were tracked down by the Gestapo, as they well knew they would be. They were tortured and executed and they foresaw that too. And when they were gone, new leaders, well knowing the fate in store for them, arose to carry on.

At this point, I want to pay humble tribute to the heroic leaders of Jewry within enemy lines. Many had visas in their pockets and could have gone out to safety but refused to abandon their unfortunate brothers. Just think of it, many of them actually came through the lines to Portugal and other neutral countries to consult with representatives of your agencies. They were begged not to go back to certain death, but they returned to their posts in German territory to bring aid and comfort to their people. Some of the martyrs who died at their posts were Hirsch, Meyerheim and Seligson of Germany; Raol Lambert of France; Friedman of Czechoslovakia; Neustadt and Gilterman of Poland and innumerable others. I bow in reverent memory to these heroes who went to their deaths in defense of humanity.

In developing underground rescue, private agencies had to guard against any activity that might impede or endanger the war effort and the war aims. I can say for them that their first concern has always been the winning of the war.

You know how, for example, when the soup kitchens in German-occupied Poland were established, your agencies devised a method to do this without allowing the Germans to obtain any American dollars from them. You know how German marks were accepted from Jews in Germany in return for dollar credits which they would receive when they left Germany, and how these German marks were used to purchase Polish currency with which to buy the food for the soup kitchens.

The establishment of the War Refugee Board on January 22, 1944, by our late President was an important event in the work to save oppressed people from the hands of the enemy. The directive which President Roosevelt gave in setting up the Board was to carry out the policy of this government "to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." Thus, it became the expressed policy of the government of the United States to save the lives of civilian victims from the enemy and to utilize its full force and prestige to that end. It was a unilateral action, and therefore unique in this war which is a combined operation of many nations. For President Roosevelt, it was a symbol of our high purposes in entering the world war,

and history will understand the heart, the mind, and the humanity that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Immediately after its establishment, the War Refugee Board called in the private agencies. The Board thereafter coordinated and directed all programs for rescue and relief. The War Refugee Board enlisted all governmental agencies, including United States diplomatic missions, that could help to carry out this government's policy to save the oppressed minorities under German control. It now became possible for the agencies, under special licenses, to communicate with persons in enemy countries, to transmit funds through underground channels, to facilitate the passage of refugees through neutral countries, and to ship food purchased in neutral countries into the concentration camps.

This partnership of the War Refugee Board and the private agencies was responsible for the rescue from the enemy of many thousands of lives. I have time to mention only a few of the outstanding projects. We have here thrilling stories of courage, tenacity, hardship and tragedy. Seven thousand Jews were brought out from the German-controlled Balkans to safety and a new life in Palestine. To rescue these people, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in cooperation with the Joint Distribution Committee, chartered tiny boats in Turkey which sailed the Black Sea without the protection of safe conducts and overloaded with people willing to face any hazard to attain a safe haven. Tragically, one of these small vessels was sunk by enemy fire just off the Turkish shores, and over 300 Balkan refugees were lost.

Many thousands of persecuted anti-Nazis were brought across the Norwegian forests to safety in Sweden. This program was organized and sponsored by labor groups in the United States. Several hundred persons in Baltic countries under German control were brought out to Sweden by small fishing vessels and motor launches clandestinely plying the Baltic Seas.

Thousands of Jews were brought from German-occupied France and Czechoslovakia, and from Austria and Hungary to safety in Switzerland and Spain. Their rescue was effected by many American relief agencies, Christian and Jewish alike, including the American Friends Service Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee, the International Rescue and Relief Committee, the World Jewish Congress, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. The Joint Distribution Committee poured millions into these hazardous operations.

Several thousand orphaned Jewish children in France were kept alive by means of funds sent from Switzerland under special licenses of this Government. The funds were used to maintain these children in convents, schools and private homes by compassionate Christians, Catholic and Protestant alike.

Many thousands more of the one million surviving Jews in Europe owe their lives in large part to the extraordinary measures taken by the Board

to safeguard and protect them while they remained under enemy control. The full story of these measures cannot yet be told.

I now want to tell you of a striking example of the democratic workings of our government that fell within my own personal experience. When I came to the War Refugee Board around February 1st of this year, the Allies were closing in on the enemy, and the distance between the eastern and western fronts was daily getting shorter and shorter. It became obvious that the continuous success of the Allied armies was rapidly decreasing the housing facilities and food supply available to the enemy, disrupting his transportation, and causing a huge concentration of people in his remaining territory. We considered it certain that, under these conditions, the Nazis would decide that it was easier and more expedient to let their victims die of exposure and starvation, instead of exterminating them directly. These victims now included all those whom the Nazis no longer could use as slave labor, as well as those already in various stages of illness. Fearing that that would happen, I as Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, on the 20th of February of this year, presented the following to the Board:

"MEMORANDUM to: Secretary Stettinius
Secretary Morgenthau
Secretary Stimson

"Our best information indicates that, while the enemy has abandoned wholesale extermination of detainees, large numbers of the physically unfit are now in imminent danger of death due to starvation, exposure and deliberate neglect. The actual numbers are unknown and are believed to be changing daily.

"Food, medicines and clothing must be distributed to such detainees at once if their lives are to be saved. They should be removed, if possible, to safety in Switzerland without unnecessary delay.

"The International Red Cross is our only means of direct contact with the camps. Operations can best be conducted from Switzerland.

"The War Refugee Board is requested to authorize its representative to obtain the necessary cooperation of the International Red Cross and of the Swiss Government.

"The War Refugee Board is further requested to approve that the necessary food, medicines and transportation equipment be made available to the International Red Cross by the Swiss Government against our promise of repayment or replenishment after the war. It is understood that private funds are available for the necessary financing."

Then and there on that date, the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War, the members of the Board, approved this proposal. We found that in order to get food into the enemy's territory we had to have trucks, gasoline,

fuel, oil and tires, and on March 21st our War Department recommended to General Eisenhower that he provide the Board with 2,000 gallons of gasoline weekly and oil and some tires. This General Eisenhower did. Shortly thereafter, trucks were rolling out of Switzerland for German concentration camps with many tons of War Refugee Board food parcels.

Early last month, the Board was faced with the exhaustion of the 1,000 tons of food it had sent to Sweden and Switzerland. Soon it would have trucks, but no food. Once again the United States Army saved the situation. On request of the Board, the Army sold the Board 1,130 tons of food already in Switzerland.

This food is now going forward through the International Red Cross to the concentration camps in the south of Germany. The International Red Cross now has representatives stationed in the major concentration camps for the purpose of supervising and distributing this food.

I suggest and strongly contend that humanity will not forget the America of our day which, despite the demands made upon its human and material resources by this greatest of all wars, still had the interest and the will to bring aid to those who would otherwise have been forgotten and have had no hope of survival.

A great part of this evening, I have talked about the efforts of your agencies and your government to save victims of Nazi oppression. We are coming to the end of the war in Europe which will terminate the work of the War Refugee Board.

It is true that even now the governments of the United Nations are giving consideration to the final relocation of the people displaced by the war. We have no doubt that sooner or later an orderly solution will result. We must remember, however, that combined operations among nations are complex and require time. It is most fortunate that there exist private agencies which are ready immediately to step into the breach.

We must not for a moment forget that the million Jewish survivors while living are barely alive. Too many of these first victims have lived so long and suffered so much under Nazi cruelties and starvation that they need immediate and extraordinary care to have even a chance to attain normal physical or mental health. Reports of eyewitnesses dispel any doubt that may exist as to the condition of all who survived the Nazi concentration camps. I will read you one report by an American war correspondent who actually saw and spoke to those found at Bergen Belsen as late as April 21st:

"I saw Belsen -- its piles of lifeless dead and its aimless swarms of living dead. Their great eyes were just animal lights in skin-covered skulls of famine.

"Some were dying of typhus, some of typhoid, some of tuberculosis, but most were just dying of starvation. Starvation -- the flesh on their bodies had fed on itself until here was no flesh left, just skin covering bones and the end of all hope, and nothing left to feed on."

General Eisenhower with his usual wisdom invited representatives of the Congress of the United States to view these horror camps and extermination centers in Germany. The reason is simple. Neither oratory nor the written word, nor the motion picture can tell the story in quite the same way as actually seeing it with one's own eyes. I know that from having seen and smelled the 350 bodies of civilian men, women and children, machine-gunned and sealed in a catacomb in Italy. I was there the day the tomb was discovered.

I wish all of us in this room could be shown the camps through which these people have passed so that we might better understand their terror of yesterday and their hopelessness of today and tomorrow. But since this cannot be done, I wish that each one of you had in your own home, at your own fireside, one of these agonized survivors. His presence, his very appearance, would tell the story of his sufferings and his needs far better than can be done by words. You could then see how sick he is in his mind and in his body. You could see his terror of the past and his dread of the darkness of his unknown future. No words of mine could match that appeal.

Those people are only half alive. It will take everything that you can give to bring them back to normal health. Your agencies, particularly the Joint Distribution Committee and the United Palestine Appeal, have the experience and the trained personnel to do a good job. They need money with which to do it and you must see them through.

DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON, D. C.

GERMAN EXTERMINATION CAMPS — AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU

It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians — Jews and Christians alike — all over Europe. This campaign of terror and brutality, which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free peoples of the world.

So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities that the minds of civilized people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place. But the governments of the United States and of other countries have evidence which clearly substantiates the facts.

The War Refugee Board is engaged in a desperate effort to save as many as possible of Hitler's intended victims. To facilitate its work the Board has representatives in key spots in Europe. These representatives have tested contacts throughout Europe and keep the Board fully advised concerning the German campaign of extermination and torture.

Recently the Board received from a representative close to the scene two eye-witness accounts of events which occurred in notorious extermination camps established by the Germans. The first report is based upon the experiences of two young Slovakian Jews who escaped in April, 1944 after spending two years in the Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau in southwestern Poland. The second report is made by a non-Jewish Polish major, the only survivor of one group imprisoned at Auschwitz.

The two reports were prepared independently and are reproduced exactly in the form they were received by the War Refugee Board, except for a few deletions necessary for the protection of persons who may still be alive. The figures concerning the size of the Jewish convoys and the numbers of men and women admitted to the two camps cannot be taken as mathematically exact; and, in fact, are declared by the authors to be no more than reliable approximations. They are accepted as such by the Board.

The Board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps. It is making the reports public in the firm conviction that they should be read and understood by all Americans.

THE EXTERMINATION CAMPS OF AUSCHWITZ (Oswiecim),

and BIRKENAU

in Upper Silesia.

FOREWORLD

Two young Slovak Jews - whose names will not be disclosed for the time being in the interest of their own safety - have been fortunate enough to escape after spending two years in the concentration camps of BIRKENAU, AUSCHWITZ and LUBLIN-MAJDANEK, where they had been deported in 1942 from SLOVAKIA.

One of them was sent on April 13, 1942 from the assembly camp of SERED directly to AUSCHWITZ and then to BIRKENAU, while the other was sent from the camp of NOVAKY to LUBLIN on June 14, 1942 and, after a short stay there, transferred to AUSCHWITZ and, later, to BIRKENAU.

The following report does not contain everything these two men experienced during their captivity, but only what one or both together underwent, heard, or experienced at first hand. No individual impressions or judgments are recorded and nothing passed on from hearsay.

The report starts with the story of the young Jew who was removed from SERED. The account of his experiences in BIRKENAU begins at the time the second Jew arrived there and is, therefore, based on the statements of both. Then follows the individual narrative of the second Jew who was sent from NOVAKY to LUBLIN and from there to AUSCHWITZ.

The declarations tally with all the trustworthy yet fragmentary reports hitherto received, and the dates given with regard to transports to various camps agree with the official records. These statements can, therefore, be considered as entirely credible.

AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU

On the 13th April, 1942 our group, consisting of 1,000 men, was loaded into railroad cars at the assembly camp of SERED. The doors were shut so that nothing would reveal the direction of the journey, and when they were opened after a long while we realized that we had crossed the Slovak frontier and were in ZWARDON. The train had until then been guarded by Hlinka men, but was now taken over by SS guards. After a few of the cars had been uncoupled from our convoy, we continued on our way arriving at night at AUSCHWITZ, where we stopped on a sidetrack. The reason the other cars were left behind was apparently the lack of room at AUSCHWITZ. They joined us, however, a few days later. Upon arrival we were placed in rows of five and counted. There were 643 of us. After a walk of about 20 minutes with our heavy packs (we had left Slovakia well equipped), we reached the concentration camp of AUSCHWITZ.

We were at once led into a huge barrack where on the one side we had to deposit all our luggage and on the other side completely undress, leaving our clothes and valuables behind. Naked, we then proceeded to an adjoining barrack where our heads and bodies were shaved and disinfected with lysol. At the exit every man was given a number which began with 28,600 in consecutive order. With this number in hand we were then herded to a third barrack where so-called registration took place. This consisted of tattooing the numbers we had received in the second barrack on the left side of our chests. The extreme brutality with which this was effected made many of us faint. The particulars of our identity were also recorded. Then we were led in groups of a hundred into a cellar, and later to a barrack where we were issued striped prisoners' clothes and wooden clogs. This lasted until 10 a.m. In the afternoon our prisoners' outfits were taken away from us again and replaced by the ragged and dirty remains of Russian uniforms. Thus equipped we were marched off to BIRKENAU.

AUSCHWITZ is a concentration camp for political prisoners under so-called "protective custody." At the time of my arrival, that is in April of 1942, there were about 15,000 prisoners in the camp, the majority of whom were Poles, Germans, and civilian Russians under protective custody. A small number of prisoners came under the categories of criminals and "work-shirkers."

AUSCHWITZ camp headquarters controls at the same time the work-camp of BIRKENAU as well as the farm labor camp of HARMENSE. All the prisoners arrive first at AUSCHWITZ where they are provided with prisoners' immatriculation numbers and then are either kept there, sent to BIRKENAU or, in very small numbers, to HARMENSE. The prisoners receive consecutive numbers upon arrival. Every number is only used once so that the last number

always corresponds to the number of prisoners actually in the camp. At the time of our escape, that is to say at the beginning of April, 1944, the number had risen up to 180,000. At the outset the numbers were tattooed on the left breast, but later, due to their becoming blurred, on the left forearm.

All prisoners, irrespective of category or nationality, are treated the same. However, to facilitate identification, they are distinguished by various coloured triangles sewed on the clothing on the left breast under the immatriculation number. The first letter indicates the nationality of the prisoner. This letter (for instance "P" for Poles) appears in the middle of the triangle. The coloured triangles have the following meaning:

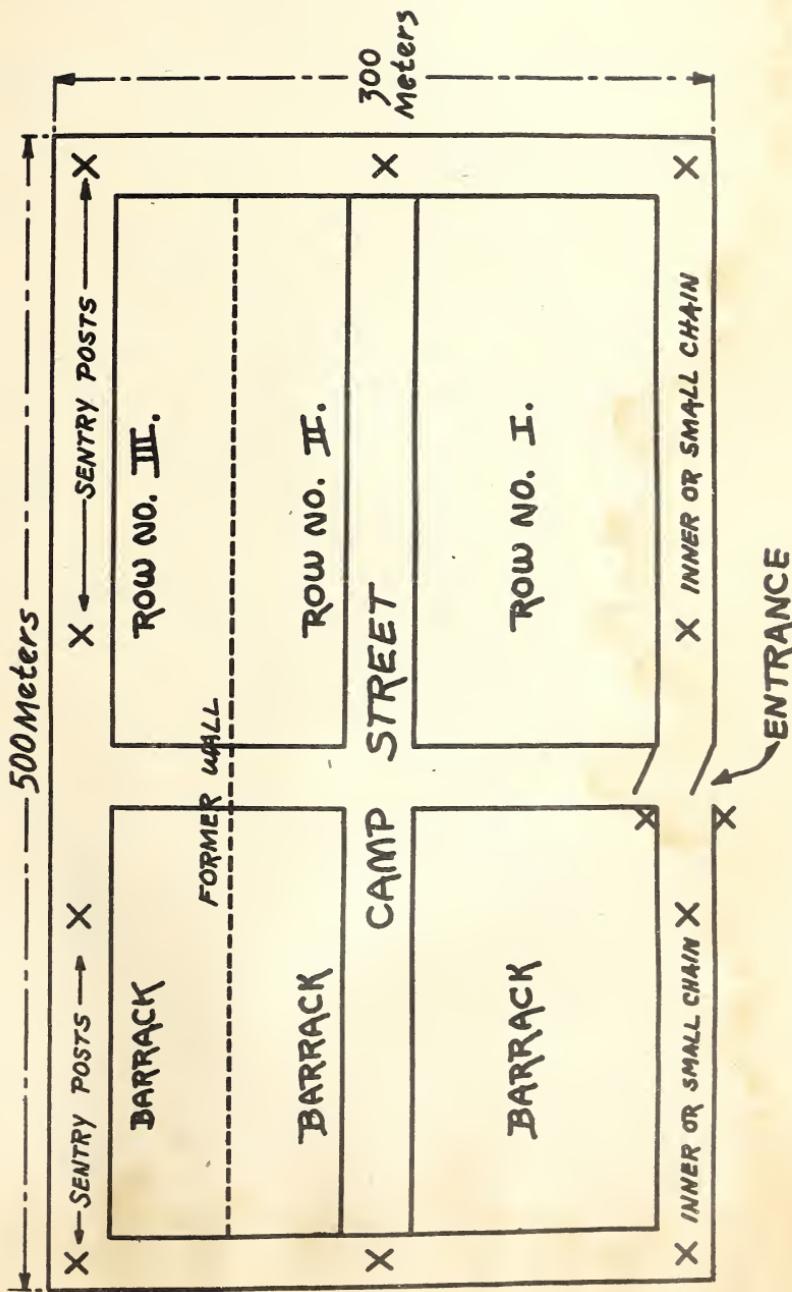
red triangle	political prisoners under protective custody
green "	professional criminals
black "	"dodgers" (labor slackers), "anti-socials" (mostly Russians)
pink "	homosexuals
violet "	members of the religious sect of "Bibelforscher"

The Jewish prisoners differ from the Aryan prisoners in that their triangle (which in the majority of cases is red) is turned into a David's star by adding yellow points.

Within the enclosure of the camp of AUSCHWITZ there are several factories: a war production plant, Deutscher Aufrüstungswerk (DAW), a factory belonging to the KRUPP works and one to the SIEMENS concern. Outside the boundary of the camp is a tremendous plant covering several square kilometers named "BUNA." The prisoners work in all the aforementioned factories.

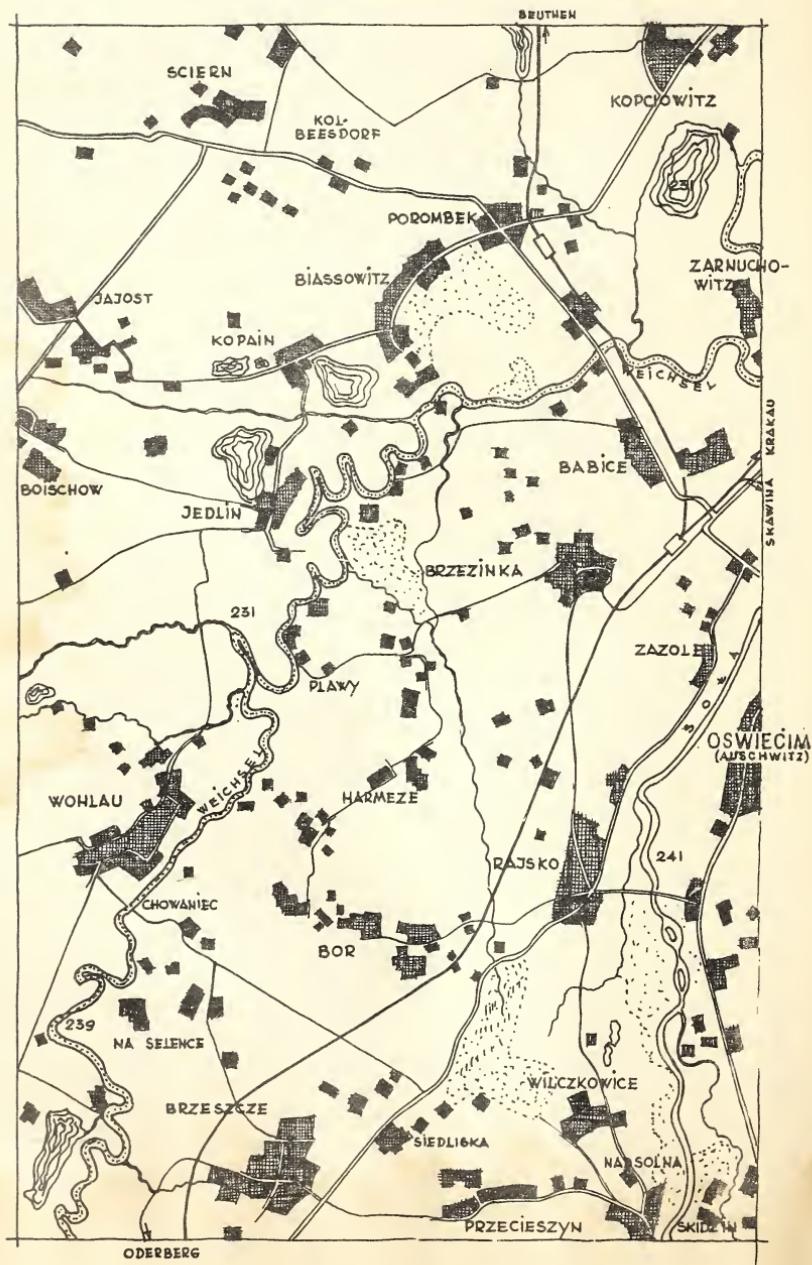
The prisoners' actual living quarters, if such a term may at all be used, inside the camp proper cover an area of approximately 500 by 300 meters surrounded by a double row of concrete posts about 3 meters high which are connected (both inside and outside) with one another by a dense netting of high-tension wires fixed into the posts by insulators. Between these two rows of posts, at intervals of 150 meters, there are 5 meters high watchtowers, equipped with machine guns and searchlights. In front of the inner high-tension circle there is further an ordinary wire fence. Merely touching this fence is answered by a stream of bullets from the watchtowers. This system is called "the small or inner chain of sentry posts." The camp itself is composed of three rows of houses. Between the first and second

ROUGH GROUND PLAN OF AUSCHWITZ



SCALE: 1/50 000

KILOMETRES



row is the camp street, and between the second and third there used to be a wall. The Jewish girls deported from Slovakia in March and April, 1942, over 7,000 of them, lived in the houses separated by this wall up to the middle of August, 1942. After these girls had been removed to BIRKENAU, the wall between the second and third row of houses was removed. The camp entry road cuts across the row of houses, while over the entrance gate, which is of course always heavily guarded, stands the ironic inscription: "Work brings freedom."

At a radius of some 2,000 meters the whole camp is encircled by a second line called "the big or outer chain of sentry posts" also with watchtowers every 150 meters. Between the inner and outer chain of sentry posts are the factories and other workshops. The towers of the inner chain are only manned at night when the high-tension current is switched into the double row of wires. During daytime the garrison of the inner chain of sentry posts is withdrawn, and the men take up duty in the outer chain. Escape through these sentry posts - and many attempts have been made - is practically impossible. Getting through the inner circle of posts at night is completely impossible, and the towers of the outer chain are so close to one another (one every 150 meters, i.e. giving each tower a sector with a 75-meter radius to watch) that approaching unnoticed is out of the question. The guards shoot without warning. The garrison of the outer chain is withdrawn at twilight, but only after it has been ascertained that all the prisoners are within the inner circle. If the roll call reveals that a prisoner is missing, sirens immediately sound the alarm.

The men in the outer chain remain in their towers on the lookout, the inner chain is manned, and a systematic search is begun by hundreds of SS guards and bloodhounds. The siren brings the whole surrounding countryside to a state of alarm, so that if by miracle the escapee has been successful in getting through the outer chain he is nearly certain to be caught by one of the numerous German police and SS patrols. The escapee is furthermore handicapped by his clean-shaven head, his striped prisoner's outfit or red patches sewn on his clothing, and the passiveness of the thoroughly intimidated inhabitants. The mere fact of neglecting to give information on the whereabouts of a prisoner, not to speak of extending help, is punished by death. Provided that the prisoner has not been caught sooner, the garrison of the outer chain of sentry posts remains on the watch for three days and nights after which delay it is presumed that the escapee has succeeded in breaking through the double circle. The following night the outer guard is withdrawn. If the escapee is caught alive, he is hanged in the presence of the whole camp; but if he is found dead, his body - wherever it may have been located - is

brought back to camp (it is easy to identify the corpse by means of the tattooed number) and seated at the entrance gate, a small notice clasped in his hands, reading: "Here I am." During our two years' imprisonment many attempts to escape were made by prisoners but, with the exception of two or three, all were brought back dead or alive. It is not known whether the two or three escapees who were not caught actually managed to get away. It can, however, be asserted that among the Jews who were deported from SLOVAKIA to AUSCHWITZ or BIRKENAU we are the only two who were lucky enough to save ourselves.

As stated previously, we were transferred from AUSCHWITZ to BIRKENAU on the day of our arrival.

Actually there is no such district as BIRKENAU. Even the word BIRKENAU is new in that it has been "adopted" from the nearby Birch Forest (BREZINSKY). The district now called BIRKENAU was, and is still, called "RAJSKA" by the local population. The existing camp center of BIRKENAU lies 4 kilometers distant from AUSCHWITZ. The outer control zones of both BIRKENAU and AUSCHWITZ meet and are merely separated by a railway track. We never found anything out about NEW-BERUN, probably about 30 to 40 kilometers away which, oddly enough, we had to indicate as postal district for BIRKENAU.

At the time of our arrival in BIRKENAU we found there only one huge kitchen for 15,000 people and three stone buildings, two of which were completed and one under construction. The buildings were surrounded by an ordinary barbed wire fence. The prisoners were housed in these buildings and in others later constructed. All are built according to a standard model. Each house is about 30 meters long and 8 to 10 meters wide. Whereas the height of the walls hardly exceeds 2 meters, the roof is disproportionately high - about 5 meters - so that the house gives the impression of a stable surmounted by a large hayloft. There is no inner ceiling, so that the room reaches a height of 7 meters in the center; in other words the pointed roofing rests directly on the four walls. The room is divided in two by a partition running its whole length down the middle and fitted with an opening to enable communication between the two parts thus separated. Along both side walls, as well as along the middle partition, two parallel floors, some 80 centimeters apart, have been built which are in turn divided into small cells by vertical partitions. Thus there are three floors: the ground floor and the two built in the side walls. Normally three people live in each cubicle. As can be judged from the dimensions indicated, these cubicles are too narrow for a man to lie stretched out and not high enough for him to sit upright.

There is no question of having enough space to stand upright. In this way some 400 to 500 people are accommodated in one house or "block." as they are also called.

The present camp of BIRKENAU covers an area of some 1,600 by 500 meters which is surrounded - similar to AUSCHWITZ - by a so-called small or inner chain of sentry posts. Work is now proceeding on a still larger compound which is to be added later on to the already existing camp. The purpose of this extensive planning is not known to us.

Within a radius of 2 kilometers, as with AUSCHWITZ, BIRKENAU is also surrounded by an outer chain of sentry posts with the same type of watch system as at AUSCHWITZ.

The buildings we found on our arrival had been erected by 12,000 Russian prisoners of war brought there in December, 1941. In severe winter weather they had to work under inhuman conditions as a result of which most of them, with the exception of a small number employed in the kitchen, died of exposure. They were numbered from 1 to 12,000 in a series which had no connection with the ordinary camp numbering system previously described. Whenever fresh convoys of Russian prisoners arrived, they were not issued the current AUSCHWITZ prisoner numbers, but received those of deceased Russians in the 1 to 12,000 series. It is, therefore, difficult to estimate how many prisoners of this category passed through the camp. Apparently Russians were transferred to AUSCHWITZ or BIRKENAU on disciplinary grounds from regular prisoner-of-war camps. We found what remained of the Russians in a terrible state of destitution and neglect living in the unfinished building without the slightest protection against cold or rain. They died "en masse." Hundreds and thousands of their bodies were buried superficially, spreading a stench of pestilence. Later we had to exhume and burn the corpses.

A week before our arrival in AUSCHWITZ the first group of Jews reached the camp: (the women were dealt with separately and received numbers parallel to those of the men; the Slovak women received serial numbers from 1 to 8,000) 1,320 naturalized French Jews from Paris. They were numbered from 27,500 onwards. It is clear, therefore, that between this French group and our convoy no other men arrived in AUSCHWITZ, since we have already pointed out that our numbers started with 28,600. We found the 700 French Jews who were still alive in terrible condition, the missing 600 having died within a week after their arrival.

The following categories were housed in the three completed buildings:

I. The so-called "prominencia": professional criminals and older Polish political prisoners who were in charge of the administration of the camp.

II. The remainder of the French Jews, namely some 700.

III. The 643 original Slovak Jews to whom were added a few days later those who had been left at ZWARDON.

IV. Those Russians who were still alive and housed in the unfinished building as well as in the open air and whose numbers diminished so rapidly that as a group they are scarcely worth mentioning.

Together with the remaining Russian prisoners the Slovak Jews worked at the construction of buildings, whereas the French Jews had to do spade work. After three days I was ordered, together with 200 other Slovak Jews, to work in the German armament factories at AUSCHWITZ, but we continued to be housed in BIRKENAU. We left early in the morning returning at night and worked in the carpentry shop as well as on road construction. Our food consisted of one litre of turnip soup at midday and 300 grams of bad bread in the evening. Working conditions were inconceivably hard, so that the majority of us, weakened by starvation and the inedible food, could not stand it. The mortality was so high that every day our group of 200 had 30 to 35 dead. Many were simply beaten to death by the overseers - the "Capos" - during work, without the slightest provocation. The gaps in our ranks caused by these deaths were replaced daily by prisoners from BIRKENAU. Our return at night was extremely painful and dangerous, as we had to drag along over a distance of 5 kilometers our tools, fire wood, heavy caldrons, and the bodies of those who had died or had been killed during the working day. With these heavy loads we were forced to maintain a brisk pace, and anyone incurring the displeasure of one of the "Capos" was cruelly knocked down, if not beaten to death. Until the arrival of the second group of Slovak men some 14 days later, our original number had dwindled to 150. At night we were counted, the bodies of the dead were piled up on flat, narrow-gauge cars or in a truck and brought to the Birch Forest (BREZINSKY) where they were burned in a trench several meters deep and about 15 meters long. Every day on our way to work we met a working party of 300 Jewish girls from Slovakia who were employed on ground work in the vicinity. They were dressed in old Russian uniform rags and wore wooden clogs. Their heads were shaven and, unfortunately, we could not speak to them.

Until the middle of May, 1942, a total of four convoys of male Jews from Slovakia arrived at BIRKENAU and all received similar treatment to ours.

From the first and second transports 120 men were chosen (including myself) and placed at the disposal of the administration of the camp of AUSCHWITZ, which was in need of doctors, dentists, intellectuals, and clerks. This group consisted of 90 Slovak and 30 French Jews. As I had in the meantime managed to work my way up to a good position in BIRKENAU - being in command of a group of 50 men, which had brought me considerable advantage - I at first felt reluctant to leave for AUSCHWITZ. However, I was finally persuaded to go and left. After eight days, 18 doctors and attendants as well as three further persons were selected from this group of 120 intellectuals. The doctors were used in the "sick building" or "hospital" at AUSCHWITZ, while we three were sent back to BIRKENAU. My two comrades, Ladislav Braun from Trnava and Gross from Vrbové (?), both of whom have since died, were sent to the Slovak block while I was ordered to the French section where we were employed at collecting "personal data" and at "nursing the sick." The remaining 99 persons were sent to work in the gravel pit where they all died within a short time.

Shortly thereafter a so-called "sick-building" (Krankenbau) was set up. It was destined to become the much dreaded "Block 7" where at first I was chief attendant and later administrator. The chief of this "infirmary" was a Pole. Actually this building was nothing else than an assembly centre for death candidates. All prisoners incapable of working were sent there. There was no question of any medical attention or care. We had some 150 dead daily and their bodies were sent for cremation to AUSCHWITZ.

At the same time the so-called "selections" were introduced. Twice weekly, Mondays and Thursdays, the camp doctor indicated the number of prisoners who were to be gassed and then burned. These "selectees" were loaded into trucks and brought to the Birch Forest. Those still alive upon arrival were gassed in a big barrack erected near the trench used for burning the bodies. The weekly "draft" in dead from "Block 7" was about 2,000, of whom 1,200 died of "natural death" and about 800 through "selection." For those who had not been "selected" a death certificate was issued and sent to the central administration at ORANIENBURG, whereas for the "selectees" a special register was kept with the indication "S.B." ("Sonderbehandelt" - special treatment). Until January 15, 1943, up to which time I was administrator of "Block 7" and therefore in a position to directly observe happenings, some 50,000 prisoners died of "natural death" or by "selection."

As previously described, the prisoners were numbered consecutively so that we are able to reconstruct fairly clearly their order of succession and the fate which befell each separate convoy on arrival.

The first male Jewish transport reaching AUSCHWITZ for BIRKENAU was composed, as mentioned, of 1,320 naturalized French Jews bearing approximately the following numbers:

27,400 - 28,600
28,600 - 29,600 In April, 1942 the first convoy of Slovak Jews (our convoy).

29,600 - 29,700 100 men (Aryans) from various concentration camps.

29,700 - 32,700 3 complete convoys of Slovak Jews.

32,700 - 33,100 400 professional criminals (Aryans) from Warsaw prisons.

33,100 - 35,000 1,900 Jews from Cracow.

35,000 - 36,000 1,000 Poles (Aryans) - political prisoners.

36,000 - 37,300 In May, 1942 - 1,300 Slovak Jews from LUBLIN-MAJDANEK.

37,300 - 37,900 600 Poles (Aryans) from RADOM, amongst them a few Jews.

37,900 - 38,000 100 Poles from the concentration camp of DACHAU.

38,000 - 38,400 400 French naturalized Jews who arrived with their families.

This whole convoy consisted of about 1,600 individuals of whom approximately 200 girls and 400 men were admitted to the camp, while the remaining 1,000 persons (women, old people, children as well as men) were sent without further procedure from the railroad siding directly to the Birch Forest, and there gassed and burned. From this moment on all Jewish convoys were dealt with in the same manner. Approximately 10 percent of the men and 5 percent of the women were allotted to the camps and the remaining members were immediately gassed. This process of extermination had already been applied earlier to the Polish Jews. During long months, without interruption, trucks brought thousands of Jews from the various "ghettos" direct to the pit in the "Birkenwald."

38,400 - 39,200 800 naturalized French Jews, the remainder of the convoy was - as previously described - gassed.

39,200 - 40,000 800 Poles (Aryans), political prisoners.

40,000 - 40,150 150 Slovak Jews with their families.

Outside of a group of 50 girls sent to the women's camp, all other members were gassed in the Birch Forest. Among the 150 men who came to camp there were a certain Zucker (Christian name unknown) and Sonnenschein, Viliam, both from Eastern Slovakia.

40,150 - 43,800 Approximately 4,000 French naturalized Jews, almost all intellectuals; 1,000 women were directed to the women's camp, while the balance of about 3,000 persons were gassed in the usual manner.

43,800 - 44,200 400 Slovak Jews from LUBLIN, including Matej Klein and No. 43820, Meiloch Laufer from Eastern Slovakia. This convoy arrived on June 30, 1942.

44,200 - 45,000 200 Slovak Jews. The convoy consisted of 1,000 persons. A number of women were sent to the women's camp, the rest gassed in the Birch Wood. Among the prisoners sent to camp were: Jozef Zelmanovic, Snina - Adolf Kahan, Bratislava - Walter Reichmann, Sucany - Esther Kahan, Bratislava.

45,000 - 47,000 2,000 Frenchmen (Aryans), communists and other political prisoners, among whom were the brother of Thorez and the young brother of Léon Blum. The latter was atrociously tortured, then gassed and burned.

47,000 - 47,500 500 Jews from Holland, in the majority German emigrants. The rest of the convoy, about 2,500 persons, gassed.

47,500 - 47,800 About 300 so-called Russians under protective custody.

48,300 - 48,620 320 Jews from Slovakia. About 70 girls were transferred to the women's camp, the remainder, some 650 people, gassed in the Birch Wood. This convoy included about 80 people who had been handed over by the Hungarian police to the camp of SERED. Others from this convoy were: Dr. Zoltan Mandel (since deceased) - Holz (Christian name unknown), butcher from Piestany, Miklos Engel, Zilina - Chaim Katz, Snina, (his wife and 6 children were gassed).

49,000 - 64,800 15,000 naturalized French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews. This figure certainly represents less than 10 percent of the total convoy. This was between July 1 and September 15, 1942. Large family convoys arrived from various European countries and were at once directed to the Birch Wood. The special squad ("Sonderkommando") employed for gassing and burning worked in day and night shifts. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were gassed during this period.

64,800 - 65,000 200 Slovak Jews. Out of this transport about 100 women were admitted to the camp, the rest of them gassed and burned. Among the newly arrived were: Ludwig Katz, Zilina - Avri Burger, Bratislava - Poprad (wife dead) - Mikulas Steiner, Povazska Bystrica - Juraj Fried, Trenčin - Buchwald - Josef Rosenwasser, Eastern Slovakia - Julius Neuman, Bardejov - Sandor Wertheimer, Vrbove - Misi Wertheimer, Vrbove - Bela Blau, Zilina.

65,000 - 68,000 Naturalized French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews. Not more than 1,000 women were "selected" and sent to the camp. The others, at the lowest estimate 30,000, were gassed.

71,000 - 80,000 Naturalized French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews. The prisoners brought to the camp hardly represent 10 percent of the total transport. A conservative estimate would be that approximately 65,000 to 70,000 persons were gassed.

On December 17, 1942, the 200 young Slovak Jews, the so-called "special squad" employed in gassing and burning the condemned, were in turn executed at BIRKENAU. They were executed for having planned to mutiny and escape. A Jew betrayed their preparations. This frightful job had to be taken over by a group of 200 Polish Jews who had just arrived at camp from MAKOW.

The men belonging to the "special squad" lived separately. On account of the dreadful smell spread by them, people had but little contact with them. Besides they were always filthy, destitute, half wild and extraordinarily brutal and ruthless. It was not uncommon to see one of them kill another. This was considered by the others a sensation, a change. One simply recorded that number so-and-so had died.

Once I was an eye-witness when a young Polish Jew named Jossel demonstrated "scientific" murder on a Jew in the presence of an SS guard. He used no weapon, merely his bare hands, to kill his victim.

No. 80,000 marks the beginning of the systematic extermination of the Polish ghettos.

80,000 - 85,000 Approximately 5,000 Jews from various ghettos in MLJAWA - MAKOW - ZICHENOW - LOMZA - GRODNO - BIALOSTOK.

For fully 30 days truck-convoys arrived without interruption. Only 5,000 persons were sent to the concentration camp; all the others were gassed at once. The "special squad" worked in two shifts, 24 hours daily and was scarcely able to cope with the gassing and burning. Without exaggerating it may be said that out of these convoys some 80,000 to 90,000 received "special treatment." These transports also brought in a considerable amount of money, valuables, and precious stones.

85,000 - 92,000 6,000 Jews from GRODNO, BIALOSTOK and CRACOW as well as 1,000 Aryan Poles. The majority of the Jewish convoys were directly gassed and daily about 4,000 Jews were driven into the gas chambers.

During mid-January, 1943 three convoys of 2,000 persons each from THIERESIENSTADT arrived. They bore the designations "CU" "CR" and "R." (The meaning of these signs is unknown to us). These markings were also stamped on their luggage. Out of these 6,000 persons only 600 men and 300 women were admitted to the camp. The remainder were gassed.

99,000 - 100,000 End of January, 1943 large convoys of French and Dutch Jews arrived; only a small proportion of them reached the camp.

100,000 - 102,000 In February, 1943, 2,000 Aryan Poles, mostly intellectuals.

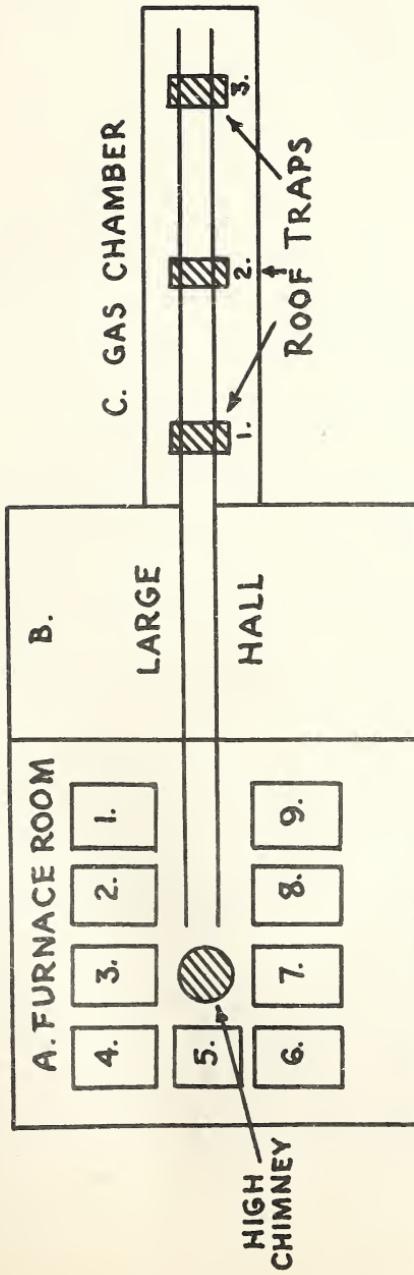
102,000 - 103,000 700 Czech Aryans. Later, those still alive were sent to BUCHENWALD.

103,000 - 108,000 3,000 French and Dutch Jews and 2,000 Poles (Aryans).

During the month of February, 1943, two contingents arrived daily. They included Polish, French, and Dutch Jews who, in the main, were sent to the gas chambers. The number gassed during this month can well be estimated at 90,000.

At the end of February, 1943 a new modern crematorium and gassing plant was inaugurated at BIRKENAU. The gassing and burning of the bodies in the Birch Forest was discontinued, the whole job being taken over by the four specially built crematoria. The large ditch was filled in, the ground levelled, and the ashes used as before for fertilizer at the farm labour camp of HERMENSE, so that today it is almost impossible to find traces of the dreadful mass murder which took place here.

At present there are four crematoria in operation at BIRKENAU, two large ones, I and II, and two smaller ones, III and IV. Those of type I and II consist of 3 parts, i.e.: (A) the furnace room; (B) the large hall; and (C) the gas chamber. A huge chimney rises from the furnace room around which are grouped nine furnaces, each having four openings. Each opening can take three normal corpses at once and after an hour and a half the bodies are completely burned. This corresponds to a daily capacity of about 2,000 bodies. Next to this is a large "reception hall" which is arranged so as to give the impression of the antechamber of a bathing establishment. It holds 2,000 people and apparently there is a similar



ROUGH GROUND PLAN OF
CREMATORIA: TYPES I & II IN BIRKENAU

waiting room on the floor below. From there a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms in order to mislead the victims. The roof is fitted with three traps which can be hermetically closed from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber towards the furnace room. The gassing takes place as follows: the unfortunate victims are brought into hall (B) where they are told to undress. To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber (C) in such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room. To compress this crowd into the narrow space, shots are often fired to induce those already at the far end to huddle still closer together. When everybody is inside, the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which SS men with gas masks climb on the roof, open the traps, and shake down a preparation in powder form out of tin cans labelled "CYKLON" "For use against vermin," which is manufactured by a Hamburg concern. It is presumed that this is a "CYANIDE" mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature. After three minutes everyone in the chamber is dead. No one is known to have survived this ordeal, although it was not uncommon to discover signs of life after the primitive measures employed in the Birch Wood. The chamber is then opened, aired, and the "special squad" carts the bodies on flat trucks to the furnace rooms where the burning takes place. Crematoria III and IV work on nearly the same principle, but their capacity is only half as large. Thus the total capacity of the four cremating and gassing plants at BIRKENAU amounts to about 6,000 daily.

On principle only Jews are gassed; Aryans very seldom, as they are usually given "special treatment" by shooting. Before the crematoria were put into service, the shooting took place in the Birch Wood and the bodies were burned in the long trench; later, however, executions took place in the large hall of one of the crematoria which has been provided with a special installation for this purpose.

Prominent guests from BERLIN were present at the inauguration of the first crematorium in March, 1943. The "program" consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Cracow Jews. The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results and the special peephole fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use. They were lavish in their praise of this newly erected installation.

109,000 - 119,000 At the beginning of March, 1943, 45,000 Jews arrived from Salomiki. 10,000 of them came to the camp, including a small percentage of the women; some 30,000 however went straight to the cremating establishment. Of the 10,000 nearly all died a short time later from a contagious illness resembling malaria. They also died of typhus due to the general conditions prevailing in the camp.

Malaria among the Jews and typhus took such toll among the prisoners in general that the "selections" were temporarily suspended. The contaminated Greek Jews were ordered to present themselves and in spite of our repeated warnings many of them did. They were all killed by intracardial phenol injections administered by a lance-corporal of the medical corps.

Out of the 10,000 Greek Jews, some 1,000 men remained alive and were later sent, together with 500 other Jews, to do fortification work in Warsaw. A few weeks later several hundred came back in a pitiful state and were immediately gassed. The remainder presumably died in Warsaw. Four hundred Greek Jews suffering from malaria were sent for "further treatment" to LUBLIN after the phenol injections had been stopped, and it appears that they actually arrived. Their fate is not known to us, but it can be taken for granted that out of the original number of 10,000 Jews not one eventually remained in the camp.

Simultaneously with the stopping of the "selections" the murdering of prisoners was forbidden. Prominent murderers such as: the Reich German professional criminals Alexander Neumann, Zimmer, Albert Haemmerle, Rudi Osterriinger, Rudi Bechert, and the political prisoners Alfred Kien and Alois Stahler, were punished for repeated murder and had to make written declaration that they had killed so and so many prisoners.

At the beginning of 1943 the political section of AUSCHWITZ received 500,000 discharge certificates and we thought with ill-concealed joy, that at least a few of us would be liberated. But the forms were simply filled out with the names of those gassed and filed away in the archives.

119,000 - 120,000 1,000 Poles (Aryans) from the PAWLAK penitentiary in Warsaw.

120,000 - 123,000 3,000 Greek Jews, part of whom were sent to replace their comrades in Warsaw. The remainder quickly died off.

123,000 - 124,000 1,000 Poles (Aryans) from RADOM and TARNOW.

124,000 - 126,000 2,000 from mixed Aryan convoys.

In the meantime, ceaseless convoys of Polish and a few French and Belgian Jews arrived and, without exception, were dispatched to the gas chambers. Among them was a transport of 1,000 Polish Jews from MAJDANEK which included three Slovaks, one of whom was a certain Spira from Stropkow or Vranov.

The flow of convoys abruptly ceased at the end of July, 1943 and there was a short breathing space. The crematoria were thoroughly cleaned, the installations repaired and prepared for further use. On August 3 the killing machine again went into operation. The first convoys consisted of Jews from BENZBURG and SOSNOWITZ and others followed during the whole month of August.

132,000 - 136,000 Only 4,000 men and a very small number of women were brought to the camp. Over 35,000 were gassed. Of the aforementioned 4,000 men, many died as a result of bad treatment, hunger or illness; some were even murdered. The main responsibility for these tragedies lies with the criminal TYN (a Reich German) from the concentration camp of SACHSENHAUSEN and the Polish political prisoner No. 8516, Mieczislav KATERZINSKI, from Warsaw.

The "selections" were introduced again and this time to a murderous extent, especially in the women's camp. The camp doctor, an SS "Hauptsturmführer" and the son or nephew of the police president of Berlin (we forget his name) outdid all the others in brutality. The selection system has been continued ever since, until our escape.

137,000 - 138,000 At the end of August 1,000 Poles came from the PAWIAK prison and 30 Jews from Greece.

138,000 - 141,000 3,000 men from various Aryan transports.

142,000 - 145,000 At the beginning of September, 1943, 3,000 Jews arrived from Polish working camps and Russian prisoners of war.

148,000 - 152,000

During the week following September 7, 1943 family transports of Jews arrived from THERESIENSTADT. They enjoyed quite an exceptional status which was incomprehensible to us. The families were not separated and not a single one of them received the customary and "normal" gas treatment. Their heads were not even shaven, they were able to keep their luggage, and were lodged in a separate section of the camp, men, women and children together. The men were not forced to work and a school was even set up for the children under the direction of Fredy HIRSCH (Makabi, Prague). They were allowed to correspond freely. The worst they had to undergo was mistreatment at the hands of their "camp eldest," a certain professional criminal by the name of Arno BOIM, prisoner No. 8. Our astonishment increased when we learned of the official indication given to this special transport:

"SB" - transport of Czech Jews with six months' quarantine -

We very well knew what "SB" meant ("Sonderbehandlung"), but could not understand the long period of six months' quarantine and the generally clement treatment this group received. The longest quarantine period we had witnessed so far was only three weeks. Towards the end of the six months' period, however, we became convinced that the fate of these Jews would be the same as that of most of the others - the gas chamber. We tried to get in touch with the leader of this group and explain their lot and what they had to expect. Some of them declared (especially Fredy HIRSCH who seemed to enjoy the full confidence of his companions) that if our fears took shape they would organize resistance. Thus, some of them hoped to instigate a general revolt in the camp. On March 6, 1944 we heard that the crematoria were being prepared to receive the Czech Jews.

I hastened to inform Fredy HIRSCH and begged him to take immediate action as they had nothing to lose. He replied that he recognized his duty. Before nightfall I again crept over to the Czech camp where I learned that Fredy HIRSCH was dying; he had poisoned himself with luminol. The next day, March 7, 1944, he was taken, unconscious, along with his 3,791 comrades who had arrived at BIRKENAU on September 7, 1943 on trucks, to the crematoria and gassed. The young people went to their death singing, but to our great disappointment nobody revolted. Some 500 elderly people had died during quarantine. Of all these Jews only 11 twins were left alive. They are being subjected to various medical tests at AUSCHWITZ, and when we left BIRKENAU they were still alive. Among the gassed was Rozsi FURST, from SERED. A week before the gassing, that is to say on March 1, 1944, everyone in the Czech group in the camp had been asked to inform his relatives about his well being. The letters had to be dated March 23 to 25, 1944 and they were requested to ask for food parcels.

153,000 - 154,000 1,000 Polish Aryans from the PAVIAK penitentiary.

155,000 - 159,000 During October and November, 1943, 4,000 persons from various prisons and smaller transports of Jews from BENZBURG and vicinity, who had been driven out of their hiding places; also a group of Russians under protective custody from the MINSK and VITEBSK regions. Some more Russian prisoners of war arrived and, as stated, they as usual received numbers between 1 and 12,000.

160,000 - 165,000 In December, 1943, 5,000 men originating from Dutch, French, Belgian transports and, for the first time, Italian Jews from FIUME, TRIESTE and ROME. Of these at least 30,000 were immediately gassed. The mortality among these Jews was very high and, in addition, the "selection" system was still decimating all ranks. The bestiality of the whole procedure reached its

culminating point between January 10 and 24, 1944 when even young and healthy persons irrespective of profession or working classification - with the exception of doctors - were ruthlessly "selected."

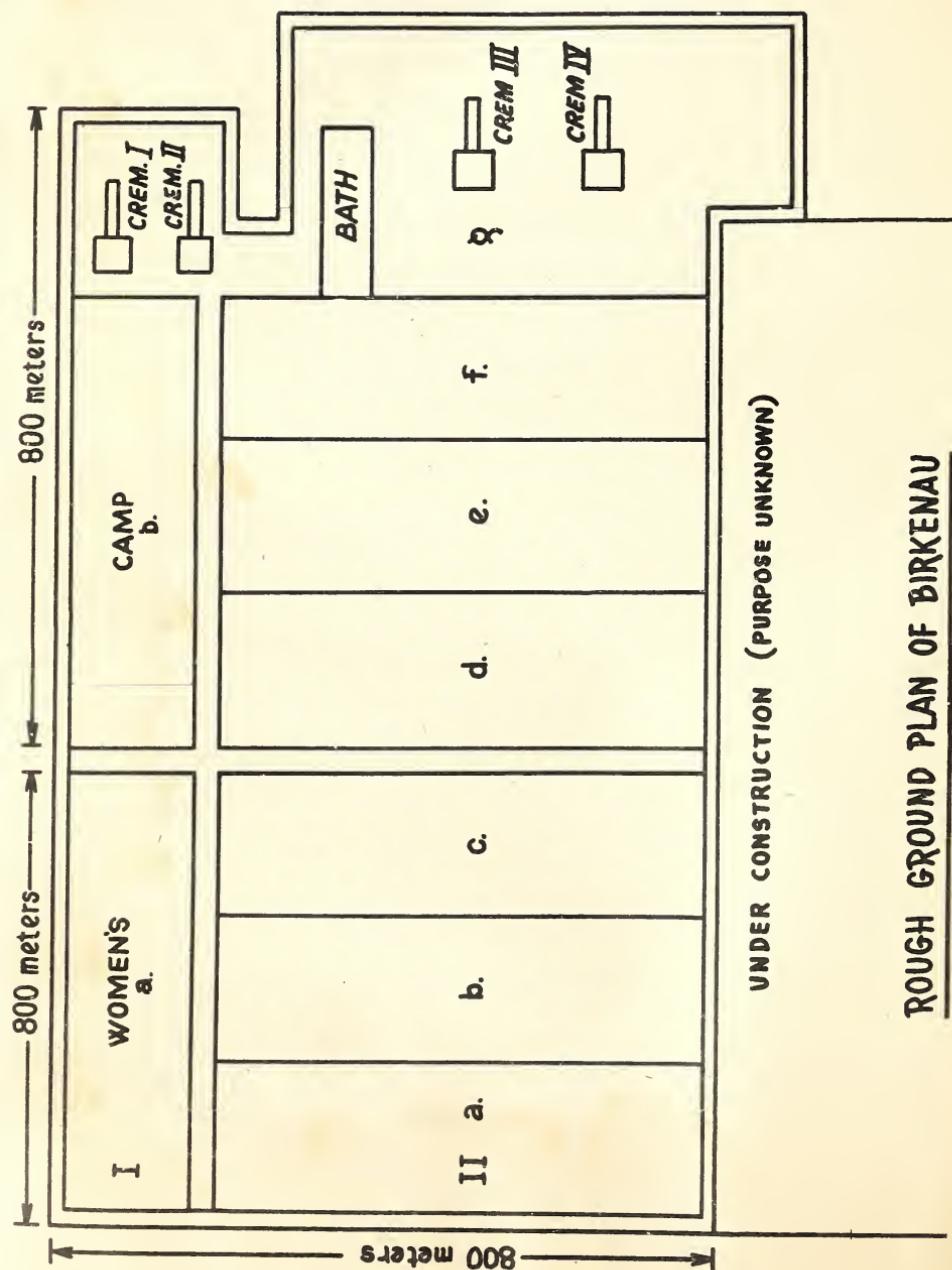
Every single prisoner was called up, a strict control was established to see that all were present, and the "selection" proceeded under the supervision of the same camp doctor (son or nephew of the Police President of Berlin) and of the Commandant of BIRKENAU, SS "Untersturmführer" SCHWARZHUBER. The "infirmary" had in the meantime been transferred from "Block 7" to a separate section of the camp where conditions had become quite bearable. Its inmates, nevertheless, were gassed to the last man. Apart from this group, this general action cost some 2,500 men and over 6,000 women their lives.

165,000 - 168,000 On December 20, 1943 a further group of 3,000 Jews arrived from THERESIENSTADT. The convoy was listed under the same category as the one which had reached the camp on September 7, i.e. "SB" - transport, Czech Jews with six months' quarantine." On their arrival, men, women and children all joined the September group. They enjoyed the same privileges as their predecessors. Twenty-four hours before the gassing of the first group took place, the latest arrivals were separated from the rest and placed in another part of the camp where they still are at present. Their quarantine ends on June 20, 1944.

169,000 - 170,000 1,000 people in small groups, Jews, Poles, and Russians under protective custody.

170,000 - 171,000 1,000 Poles and Russians and a number of Yugoslavs.

171,000 - 174,000 At the end of February and beginning of March, 3,000 Jews from Holland, Belgium, and for the first time long-established French Jews (not naturalized) from VICHY, in France. The greater part of this transport was gassed immediately upon arrival.



Small groups of BENZBURGER and SOSNOWITZER Jews, who had been dragged from hiding, arrived in the middle of March. One of them told me that many Polish Jews were crossing over to Slovakia and from there to Hungary and that the Slovak Jews helped them on their way through.

After the gassing of the THERESIENSTADT transport there were no further arrivals until March 15, 1944. The effective strength of the camp rapidly diminished and men of later incoming transports, especially Dutch Jews, were directed to the camp. When we left on April 7, 1944 we heard that large convoys of Greek Jews were expected.

The camp of BIRKENAU consists of three building areas. At present only sections I and II are guarded by the inner chain of sentry posts, whereas section III is still under construction and uninhabited. At the time of our departure from the camp (the beginning of April, 1944), the following categories of prisoners were in BIRKENAU:

Section I (Women's concentration camp)

	Slov. Jews	Other Jews	Aryans	Remarks
Ia and Ib	app. 300	app. 7,000	app. 6,000	In addition to the 300 Slovak Jewish girls, app. 100 are employed in the administration building of AUSCHWITZ.

Section II (Women's Concentration Camp)

	Slov. Jews	Other Jews	Aryans	Remarks
IIa Quarantine camp	2	app. 200	app. 800	One of the two Slovak Jews is Dr. Andreas MULLER from Podolinec (block eldest).
IIb Jews from THERESIENSTADT	-	" 3,500	-	With a six months' quarantine.
IIc At present uninhabited	-	-	-	
IID "Stammlager"	58	" 4,000	" 6.000	
IIe Gypsy camp	-	-	" 4,500	This is the remainder of some 16,000 gypsies. They are not used for work and die off rapidly.
IIIf Infirmary	6	" 1,000	" 500	The six Slovak Jews are all employees of the building, namely:

No. 36,832 Walter SPITZER, block eldest from NEMSOVA, came to LUBLIN from BIRKENAU.

" 29,867 Jozef NEUMANN, ("overseer" of the "corpse crew") from SNINA.

" 44,989 Josef ZELMANOVIC, "staff" from SNINA.
- Cham KATZ, "staff" from SNINA.

" 30,049 Ludwig SOLMANN, "clerk" from KESMAREK.

" 32,407 Ludwig EISENSTADTER, tattooist from KREMPACHY.

The internal administration of the camp of BIRKENAU is run by specially selected prisoners. The "blocks" are not inhabited according to nationalities but rather according to working categories. Each block is supervised by a staff of five, i.e., a block eldest, a block recorder, a male nurse, and two attendants.

The block eldest

He wears an arm band with the number of his block, and is responsible for order there. He has power over life and death. Until February, 1944 nearly 50 percent of the block eldests were Jews but this was stopped by order of BERLIN. They all had to resign with the exception of three Jews who, in spite of this order, were able to keep their posts.

The block recorder

He is the block eldest's right hand, does all the clerical work, keeping the index cards and records. His work is of great responsibility and he has to keep his ledgers with painful exactitude as the index cards only indicate the number and not the name of the prisoners; errors are fatal. For instance, if the recorder has noted down a death by mistake - and this often occurs with the unusually high mortality - the discrepancy is simply straightened out by killing the bearer of the corresponding number. Corrections are not admitted. The block recorder occupies a key post which is often misused.

Nursing and "room" duties

They consist in keeping the inside of the barracks clean and carrying out small manual jobs in and around the block. Of course there is no question of really taking care of the sick.

The camp eldest supervises the whole camp; he is also a prisoner. This post is at present held by:

Franz DANISCH, No. 11,182, a political prisoner, from KONIGSHÜTTE, Upper Silesia. He is undisputed master of the whole camp and has power to nominate or dismiss block eldests and block-recorders, hand out jobs, etc.

Further we have a "chief recorder" whose position is undoubtedly one of the most powerful in the camp. He is in direct contact with camp headquarters, receiving their orders and reporting on all matters. All camp recorders are directly subordinated to him and have to submit all their reports to him. The chief recorder of BIRKENAU is:

Kasimir GORK, No. 31,029, a Pole from WARSAW, a former bank clerk.

The supreme control over the blocks lies in the hands of six to eight "block leaders," all SS men. Every night they hold roll call, the result of which is communicated to:

The Camp Leader, "Untersturmführer" SCHWARZHUBER, from the Tyrol. This individual is an alcoholic and a sadist. Over him is the camp commander who also controls AUSCHWITZ where there is a second subordinate camp leader. The camp commander's name is: HOESS.

The Chief of a work squad or group is called the "Capo."

During work the "Capo" has full authority over his group of prisoners and not infrequently one of these "Capos" kills a man working under him. In larger squads there may be several "Capos" who are then under the orders of a "Capo-in-chief." At first there were many Jewish "Capos," but an order from BERLIN prohibited their being employed.

Supreme control over work is carried out by German specialists.

II. MAJDANEK

On June 14, 1942 we left NOVAKY, passed through ZILINA and arrived at ZWARDON toward 5 o'clock in the evening. We were assembled, counted, and SS men took over our convoy. One of these guards voiced his surprise at the fact we had made the journey without water by shouting: "Those Slovak barbarians, give them no water!" The journey continued and we reached LUBLIN two days later. Here the following order was issued: "Those fit for work aged between 15 and 50 are to leave the cars. Children and old people remain." We struggled out of the freight car and discovered that the station was surrounded by Lithuanians in SS uniforms, all armed with automatic pistols. The cars containing the children and old people were immediately closed and the train moved on. We do not know where they went and what happened to them.

The SS troop leader in command informed us that we had a long way ahead of us, but that whoever wanted to take his luggage with him could do so. Those who preferred to put it on a truck would certainly receive it later. So some of us dragged along our luggage, whereas others loaded it on the truck.

Behind the town stood a clothing factory called the "Bekleidungswerke." In the courtyard waiting for their noon meal some 1,000 prisoners in dirty striped clothing, obviously Jews, were lined up and the sight of them was none too encouraging. Arriving on a small hill we suddenly sighted the vast barrack camp of MAJDANEK surrounded by a 3-meter-high barbed-wire fence. No sooner had we gone through the entrance gate than I met a prisoner who warned me that all our personal belongings would be taken away. Around us stood Slovak Jews in a wretched condition, their heads shaven, in dirty prison clothes and wooden clogs or simply bare-footed, many of them having swollen feet. They begged us for food and we gave them what we could spare, knowing very well that everything would be confiscated anyway. We were then conducted to the stock room where we had to leave everything we possessed. At double time we were herded into another barrack where we had to undress, were shaved, and given a shower. After this we were issued convict outfits, wooden clogs and caps.

I was assigned to "working section No. 2" as the whole camp was divided into three such sections separated by wire fences. Section No. 2 was occupied by a number of Slovak and Czech Jews. For two full days we were taught how to remove and put on our caps when we met a German. Then in the pouring rain we practiced roll calling for hours.

The barrack accommodations were quite original to say the least. Three long tables (nearly as long as the barrack itself) had been placed one on top of the other. These comprised our "bunks" (4 floors of them, that is ground floor plus the three tables). A small passage was kept open along the walls.

Our food consisted of a fairly thick "soup" early in the morning which had to be eaten with the hands. We got the same soup again at lunch. The evening meal consisted of a brew called "tea," 300 grams of bad bread and some 20 to 30 grams of marmalade or artificial fat of the worst quality.

Great importance was attributed during the first few days to the learning of the "camp song." For hours we stood singing:

From the whole of Europe came
We Jews to Lublin
Much work has to be done
And this is the beginning.

To manage this duty
Forget all about the past
For in fulfillment of duty
There is community.

Therefore on to work with vigour
Let everyone play his part
Together we want to work
At the same pace and rhythm.

Not all will understand
Why we stand here in rows
Those must we soon force
To understand its meaning.

Modern times must teach us
Teach us all along
That it is to work
And only to work we belong.

Therefore on to work with vigour
Let everyone play his part
Together we want to work
At the same pace and rhythm.

(This is a literal translation of the song).

Working section No.	I	was occupied by	Slovak Jews
"	"	"	II " " " Slovak and Czech Jews
"	"	"	III " " " Partisans
"	"	IV & V	was being built by the Jews of Sectors I & II

The Partisans in section III were locked up in their barracks without having to work and their food was thrown at them as if they had been dogs. They died in great numbers in their over-crowded barracks and were shot at the slightest excuse by the guards who did not dare venture too near them.

The "Capos" were Reich Germans and Czechs; whereas the Germans were brutal, the Czechs helped wherever they could. The camp eldest was a gypsy from HOLIC by the name of GALBAVY. His adjutant, a Jew from SERED called MITTLER, certainly owed his post to his brutal actions. He took full advantage of the power conferred upon him to torment the Jews who, as it was, already had their full share of hardships. The evening roll call brought us more brutal treatment from the SS men and for hours we had to stand in the open after a hard day's work and sing the "camp song." A Jewish orchestra leader was forced to conduct from the roof of one of the barracks. This was the occasion of much hilarity among the SS men.

During these "concert parties" the SS guards were very generous with blows and physical punishment. A tragic end befell Rabbi ECKSTEIN from SERED who was suffering from dysentery and once came a few minutes too late for the roll call. The group leader had him seized and dipped head first into one of the latrines, then poured cold water over him, drew his revolver and shot him.

The crematorium was located between working sections I and II and all the bodies were burned there. With an effective strength of 6,000 to 8,000 men per working section, the mortality was about 30 a day. This figure later increased five and sixfold. In other instances 10 to 20 inmates were removed from the sick room, brought to the crematorium and burned, after having been put to death in a manner which I have not been able to find out. This crematorium was electrically heated and the attendants were Russians.

Illnesses increased as a result of the bad food and intolerable living conditions. Serious stomach troubles and a seemingly incurable foot disease spread throughout the camp. The feet of the victims swelled up to the point where they could not walk. More and more of the sick were now being taken to the crematorium and when on June 26, 1942 the number thus treated rose to 70, I decided to take an opportunity which was offered to me and applied for a transfer to AUSCHWITZ.

On June 27, 1942 I discarded my prisoner's outfit and travelled to AUSCHWITZ in civilian clothes.

After a journey of 48 hours during which we were couped up in freight cars without food or water, we arrived at AUSCHWITZ half dead. At the entrance gate the huge poster, "Work brings freedom," greeted us. As the courtyard was clean and well kept, and the brick buildings made a good impression after the dirty and primitive barracks of LUBLIN, we thought that the change was for the best. We were taken to a cellar and received tea and bread. Next day, however, our civilian clothes were taken away, our heads were shaved, and our numbers were tattooed on our forearms in the usual way. Finally, we were issued a set of prisoner's clothes similar to those we had worn in LUBLIN and were enrolled as "political prisoners" in the concentration camp of AUSCHWITZ.

We were billeted in "Block 17" and slept on the floor. In an adjoining row of buildings separated from ours by a high wall, the Jewish girls from Slovakia, who had been brought there in March and April of 1942, were quartered. We worked in the huge "BUNA" plant to which we were herded every morning about 3 a.m. At midday our food consisted of potato or turnip soup and in the evening we received some bread. During work we were terribly mistreated. As our working place was situated outside the large chain of sentry posts, it was divided into small sectors of 10 x 10 meters, each guarded by an SS man. Whoever stepped outside these squares during working hours was immediately shot without warning for having "attempted to escape." Often it happened that out of pure spite an SS man would order a prisoner to fetch some given object outside his square. If he followed the order, he was shot for having left his assigned place. The work was extremely hard and there were no rest periods. The way to and from work had to be covered at a brisk military trot; anyone falling out of line was shot. On my arrival about 3,000 people, of whom 2,000 were Slovak Jews, were working on this emplacement. Very few could bear the strain and although escape seemed hopeless, attempts were made every day. The result was several hangings a week.

After a number of weeks of painful work at the "BUNA" plant a terrible typhus epidemic broke out. The weaker prisoners died in hundreds. An immediate quarantine was ordered and work at the "BUNA" stopped. Those still alive were sent, at the end of July, 1942, to the gravel pit but there work was even still more strenuous. We were in such a state of weakness that, even in trying to do our best, we could not satisfy the overseers. Most of us got swollen feet. Due to our inability to perform the heavy work demanded of us our squad was accused of being lazy and disorderly. Soon after a medical commission inspected all of us; they carried out their job very thoroughly. Anyone with swollen feet or particularly weak was separated from the rest. Although I was in great pain, I controlled myself and stood erect in front of the commission who passed me as physically fit. Out of 300 persons examined, 200 were found to be unfit and immediately sent to BIRKENAU and gassed. I was then detailed for work at the DAW (Deutsche Aufrüstungswerke) where we had to paint skis. The prescribed minimum to be painted each day was 120. Anyone unable to paint this many was thoroughly flogged in the evening. It meant working very hard to avoid this punishment. Another group was employed at making cases for hand grenades. At one time 15,000 had been completed but it was found that they were a few centimeters too small. As punishment several Jews were shot for sabotage.

Somewhere around the middle of August, 1942 all the Jewish girls from Slovakia who lived next to our quarters, on the other side of the wall, were transferred to BIRKENAU. I had the opportunity to talk to them and was able to see how weak and half-starved

all of them were. They were dressed in old Russian uniform rags and wore wooden clogs. Their heads were shaven clean. The same day we again had to undergo a strict examination and those suspected of having typhus were removed to the Birch Wood. The remainder were shaved afresh, bathed, issued a new set of clothes and finally billeted in the barracks the girls had just left. By chance I learned that there was an opening in the "clearance squad" and I handed in my application. I was detailed to this task.

This squad consisted of about a hundred Jewish prisoners. We were sent to a far corner of the camp, away from all our comrades. Here we found huge sheds full of knapsacks, suitcases, and other luggage. We had to open each piece of baggage and sort the contents into large cases specially prepared for each category of goods, i.e. combs, mirrors, sugar, canned food, chocolate, medicines, etc. The cases were then stored away. Underwear, shirts and clothes of all kinds went to a special barrack, where they were sorted out and packed by Jewish girls. Old and worn clothes were addressed to the "TEXTILE FACTORY" at MEMEL, whereas the usable garments were dispatched to a collecting center in BERLIN. Gold, money, bank notes, and precious stones had to be handed over to the political section. Many of these objects were, however, stolen by the SS guards or by prisoners. A brutal and vile individual who often struck the women is commander of this squad. He is SS "Scharführer" WYKLEFF.

Every day the girls who came to their work from BIRKENAU described to us the terrible conditions prevailing there. They were beaten and brutalized and their mortality was much higher than among the men. Twice a week "selections" took place, and every day new girls replaced those who had disappeared.

During a night shift I was able to witness for the first time how incoming convoys were handled. The transport I saw contained Polish Jews. They had received no water for days and when the doors of the freight cars were open we were ordered to chase them out with loud shouts. They were utterly exhausted and about a hundred of them had died during the journey. The living were lined up in rows of five. Our job was to remove the dead, dying, and the luggage from the cars. The dead, and this included anyone unable to stand on his feet, were piled in a heap. Luggage and parcels were collected and stacked up. Then the railroad cars had to be thoroughly cleaned so that no trace of their frightful load was left behind. A commission from the political department proceeded with the "selection" of approximately 10 percent of the men and 5 percent of the women and had them transferred to the camps. The remainder were loaded on trucks, sent to BIRKENAU,

and gassed while the dead and dying were taken directly to the furnaces. It often happened that small children were thrown alive into the trucks along with the dead. Parcels and luggage were taken to the warehouses and sorted out in the previously described manner.

Between July and September, 1942 a typhus epidemic had raged in AUSCHWITZ, especially in the women's camp of BIRKENAU. None of the sick received medical attention and in the first stages of the epidemic a great many were killed by phenol injections, and later on others were gassed wholesale. Some 15,000 to 20,000, mostly Jews, died during these two months. The girls' camp suffered the most, as it was not fitted with sanitary installations, and the poor wretches were covered with lice. Every week large "selections" took place and the girls had to present themselves naked to the "selection committee," regardless of weather conditions. They waited in deadly fear whether they would be chosen or given another week's grace. Suicides were frequent and were mostly committed by throwing one's self against the high tension wires of the inner fence. This went on until they had dwindled to 5 percent of their original number. Now there are only 400 of these girls left and most of them have been able to secure some sort of clerical post in the women's camp. About 100 girls hold jobs at the staff building in AUSCHWITZ where they do all the clerical work connected with the administration of the two camps. Thanks to their knowledge of languages they are also used as interpreters. Others are employed in the main kitchen and laundry. Of late these girls have been able to dress themselves quite well as they have had opportunities to complete their wardrobes which, in some cases, even include silk stockings. Generally speaking they are reasonably well off and are even allowed to let their hair grow. Of course this cannot be said of the other Jewish inmates of the women's camp. It just so happens that these Slovak Jewish girls have been in the camp the longest of all. But if today they enjoy certain privileges, they have previously undergone frightful sufferings.

I was not to hold this comparatively good job with the "clearance squad" for long. Shortly afterwards I was transferred to BIRKENAU on disciplinary grounds and remained there over a year and a half. On April 7, 1944 I managed to escape with my companion.

Careful estimate of the number of Jews gassed
in BIRKENAU between April. 1942 and April, 1944
(according to countries of origin).

Poland (transported by truck)	approximately	300,000
" " " train	"	600,000
Holland	"	100,000
Greece	"	45,000
France	"	150,000
Belgium	"	50,000
Germany	"	60,000
Yugoslavia, Italy and Norway	"	50,000
Lithuania	"	50,000
Bohemia, Moravia and Austria	"	30,000
Slovakia	"	30,000
Various camps for foreign Jews in Poland ..	"	300,000
<hr/>		approximately 1,765,000
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III.

On August 6, 1944 a report was received in Switzerland covering the happenings in BIRKENAU during the period between April 7 and May 27. This second report was drawn up by two other young Jews who succeeded in escaping from this camp and reaching Slovakia.

Their declarations complete the first report, particularly in regard to the arrival of the Hungarian Jews in BIRKENAU. They also add certain new details not contained in the previous accounts. It has not been possible, however, to check the origin of this "second report" as closely as it was the first.

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After the flight of the two Slovak Jews from BIRKENAU on April 7, 1944 great excitement reigned in the camp. The "Political Division" of the Gestapo instituted a thoroughgoing investigation, and the friends and superiors of the two escapees were closely questioned, although in vain. Since the two had held posts as "block recorders," all Jews exercising such functions, by way of punishment and also as a precautionary measure, were removed and, as the Gestapo suspected that they had succeeded in escaping through Building No. 3, the outer chain of sentry posts was considerably shortened so that now it cuts through the middle of Building No. 3.

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At the beginning of the month of April, a transport of Greek Jews arrived, of whom about 200 were admitted to the camp. The remainder of circa 1,500 were immediately gassed.

Between the 10th and 15th of April some 5,000 "Aryans" arrived in BIRKENAU, mainly Poles, some 2,000 to 3,000 women among them being from the abandoned camp of LUBLIN-MAJDANEK. They were given numbers running from approximately:

176,000 to 181,000 Among the women were about 300 Jewish girls from Poland. The greater part of the new arrivals were ill, weak, and very run down. According to their information the healthy ones had been sent from LUBLIN to German concentration camps. Concerning the fate of the Jews held in the camp of LUBLIN-MAJDANEK, we learned from them, especially from the Jewish girls, that on November 3, 1943 all Jews in this camp, that is some 11,000 men and 6,000 women, were killed.

We recalled that about this time the SS in BIRKENAU had reported that LUBLIN had been attacked by partisans and, in order to fight against the latter, a number of the SS personnel from BIRKENAU had been temporarily transferred to LUBLIN. It was now clear to us for what purpose our SS had gone to LUBLIN.

Apparently the Jews had been compelled to dig a long, deep grave in Field V of the camp of MAJDANEK and on November 3 they were brought out in groups of 200 to 300, shot and thrown into the grave. Within 24 hours everything was over. During the execution loud music was played to drown out the shots.

Three hundred girls who were active in LUBLIN on the "clearing-up Commando" and as recorders were left alive. Three days after their arrival in BIRKENAU they were all gassed and burned on special order of BERLIN. Through an error on the part of the "recorder" two of the girls were not sent to the gas chamber. This was discovered, however, the next day, and the girls were immediately shot and the recorder replaced.

The fate of the LUBLIN Jews caused great depression among the Jews in the camp of BIRKENAU who became afraid that one day the whole of BIRKENAU would suddenly be "liquidated" in the same way.

Approximately
No. 182,000

Toward the end of April more Greek Jews were brought to BIRKENAU. Some 200 were admitted to the camp and about 3,000 exterminated.

183,000 to 185,000

At the beginning of May, 1944 smaller transports of Dutch, French, Belgian, and Greek Jews arrived, as well as Polish "Aryans." Most of them were put to work in the BUNA plant.

On May 10, 1944 the first transport of Hungarian Jews arrived in BIRKENAU. They were principally from the prisons of Budapest, including those who had been arrested in the streets and railroad stations of the city. Among the women were:

Ruth Lorant
Mici Lorant
Ruth Qiaszler
Irene Roth
Barna Fuchs

The transport was received in AUSCHWITZ and BIRKENAU according to the well-known procedure (heads shaved, numbers tattooed, etc.) The men were given numbers beginning with 186,000 and the women were placed in the women's camp. About 600 men, of whom some 150 were between the ages of 45 and 60, were brought to BIRKENAU where they were divided up among various work detachments. The remainder stayed in AUSCHWITZ where they worked in the BUNA plant.

The members of the transport were all left alive and none of them, as had been customary, were sent directly to the crematoria. In the postcards which they were allowed to write, they had to give "Waldsee" as return address.

On May 15 mass transports from Hungary began to arrive in BIRKENAU. Some 14,000 to 15,000 Jews arrived daily. The spur railroad track which ran into the camp to the crematoria was completed in great haste, the crews working night and day, so that the transports could be brought directly to the crematoria. Only about 10 percent of these transports were admitted to the camp; the balance were immediately gassed and burned. Never had so many Jews been gassed since the establishment of BIRKENAU. The "Special Commando" had to be increased to 600 men and, after two or three days, to 800 (people being recruited from among the Hungarian Jews who had arrived first). The size of the "Clearing Commando" was stepped up from 150 to 700 men. Three crematoria worked day and night (the 4th was being repaired at that time) and, since the capacity of the crematoria was not enough, great pits 30 meters long and 15 meters wide were once more dug in the "Birkenwald" (as in the time before the crematoria) where corpses were burned day and night. Thus the "exterminating capacity" became almost unlimited.

The Hungarian Jews who were left alive (about 10 percent) were not included in the normal camp "enrollment." Although they were shaved and shorn and received convict's clothing, they were not tattooed. They were housed in a separate section of the camp, section "C", and were later transferred to various concentration camps in the German Reich: Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Grossrosen,

Gusen, Flossenburg, Sachsenhausen, etc. The women were temporarily quartered in the "gypsy camp" in separate blocks and then also transferred elsewhere. Jewish girls from Slovakia were "block eldests" there.

The first Hungarian transports came from: Munkacs, Nagyszőllős, Nyiregyhaza, Ungvar, Huszt, Kassau, Beregszasz, Marmarossziget, Nagyberezna. Among those remaining alive were:

Robert and Ervin Waizen
Stark
Ehrenreich
Katz, Chaim

The last two have already been transferred. The parents of the Waizen brothers were gassed.

The transports of Hungarian Jews were under the particular control of the former Camp Commander "Hauptsturmbannführer" HÖSS, who travelled continually between AUSCHWITZ and Budapest. The Commandant of Birkenau at this time was HÖSS' former adjutant, "Hauptsturmführer" KRAMER.

187,000 to 189,000 1,600 French "Aryans," almost exclusively intellectuals and prominent persons, including a small number of Polish "émigrés." Among the French were high officers, members of leading French financial circles, well-known journalists and politicians, and even, it was said, former ministers. On their arrival some of them rebelled but were put down in an exceedingly brutal fashion by the SS, some of them being shot on the spot. The French were very courageous and self-possessed. They were strictly isolated in BIRKENAU and no one was allowed to have any contact with them. After two weeks, on orders from Berlin, they were sent to Mauthausen (near Linz, in Austria.).

Since the middle of May the newly arrived Jews no longer received consecutive numbers, as formerly. A new numbering system was inaugurated beginning with No. 1 preceded by the tattooed letter "A." We do not know the reason for this measure. At the time of our flight on May 27, 1944 about 4,000 Jews had received these new numbers. The 4,000 were composed of 1,000 Dutch, French, and Italian Jews and 3,000 Jews from THERESIENSTADT who reached BIRKENAU on May 23, 1944. These were treated exactly as the previous two transports from THERESIENSTADT. They were quartered

(unshorn) with the members of the previous convoy from THERESIENSTADT (who have been in BIRKENAU since December 20, 1943 and whose "quarantine" is due to be up on June 20, 1944) in Section IIB.

According to the statement of a Jew from the "Special Commando," "Reichsführer" Himmler was said to have visited BIRKENAU on the 15th or 16th of May. On one of these days I myself saw three automobiles and five men in civilian clothing drive toward the crematoria. The Jew who made this statement declared that he, as well as others, recognized Himmler, who had visited crematorium No. 1 and after a stay of about half an hour had again driven off with those accompanying him. On the day after there was an account in the Silesian newspapers of Himmler's visit to Cracow, so that this report could be true.

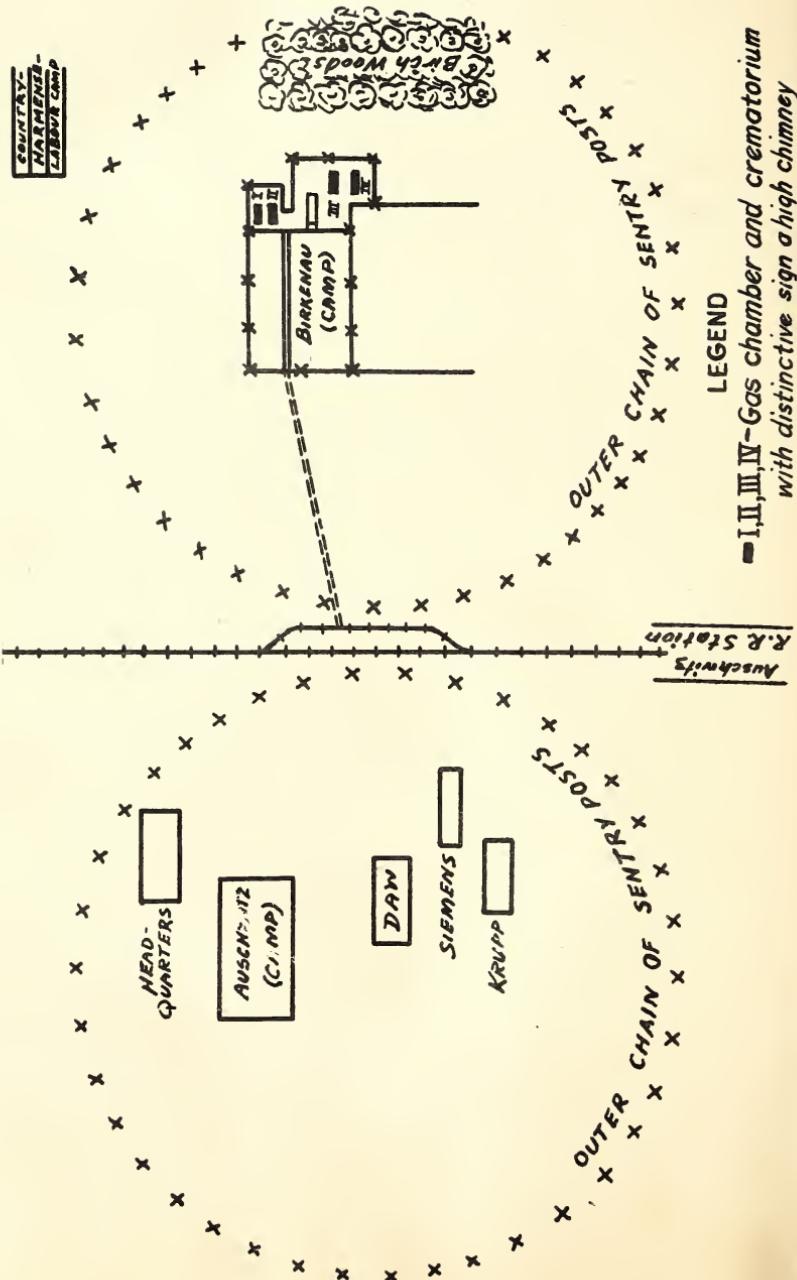
One other happening should not be forgotten which was told to us by the men of the "Special Commando." In the late summer of 1943 a commission of four Dutch Jews - distinguished looking men - came to AUSCHWITZ. Their visit had already apparently been announced to the Camp Commander, for the Dutch Jews in AUSCHWITZ received better clothes, as well as regular eating equipment (plates, spoons, etc.) and better food. The commission of four were very politely received and were shown over the camp buildings and particularly those portions which were clean and made a good impression. Dutch Jews from the camp were brought to them who reported that only a portion of the Dutch Jews were in this camp, the others being in other similar camps. In this manner the four men were satisfied and signed a statement according to which the commission had found everything in good order in AUSCHWITZ. After the signing the four Dutch Jews expressed a desire to see the camp of BIRKENAU and particularly the crematoria about which they had heard some stories. The camp authorities declared themselves quite willing to show them both BIRKENAU and the crematoria, the latter being used, they said, to cremate those who die in the camp. The commission was then taken to BIRKENAU, accompanied by the camp leader, Aumayer, and immediately to crematorium No. 1. Here they were shot from behind. A telegram was supposedly sent to Holland reporting that after leaving AUSCHWITZ the four men had been victims of an unfortunate automobile accident.

There is a biological laboratory in AUSCHWITZ where SS, civilian, and internee doctors are occupied. The women and girls on whom experiments are performed are housed in Block 10. For a long time the "block eldest" there was Magda Hellinger from Michalovce and a girl named Rozsi (family name unknown) from Hummené. Experiments were carried out only on Jewish girls and women, although to date no Slovakian girls have been used.

Experiments were also performed on men but the matt were not housed separately. A great many died as a result of these experiments. Often gypsies were used. Block 10, where the "subjects" of the experiments are housed, is completely isolated, and even the window openings are walled up. No one whatsoever had admission to it.

The Commandants of AUSCHWITZ and BIRKENAU have been to date the following: AUMAYER, SCHWARZHUBER, WEISS, HARTENSTEIN, HÖSS, and KRAMER.

APPROXIMATE SITUATION SKETCH
OF AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU
CAMP DISTRICTS



No. 2

TRANSPORT

(The Polish Major's Report)

- 1414 -

TRANSPORT

On March 24, 1942 we were gathered together in special "assembling cell" No. 2 of the Montelupich prison in Cracow. We knew that our group consisting of 60 men was to be sent to the concentration camp of OSWIECIM (AUSCHWITZ). At 8 o'clock the next morning, two SS guards appeared with lists and started counting those present. We had to undress and wait. Finally the doors were opened and we caught sight of two columns of SS guards and policemen with fixed bayonets. In the courtyard two trucks were parked in each of which 30 men had to take their places. These trucks were quite small and the space on the inside was divided in two by a chain running across the middle. The first to enter had to stand with bent heads, whereas the others crouched down between the legs of the standing men. In this way it was possible to fill up the very small space with 30 men. We were loaded in with blows from rifle-butts, shouts and kicks. In the second separated section of the truck, two SS men stood guard with machine guns. We departed. Behind us, at a certain distance, followed motor-cyclists with machine guns. Our trucks were hermetically closed so that there was no possibility of seeing where we were going. Our journey lasted 1 1/2 hours with several short stops. Our limbs grew stiff as there was no possibility of changing one's position, and one of our men who was up against the chain became unconscious. He was brought back to his senses by blows from the guards. At last we arrived, staggered to the ground, and found ourselves standing in front of a gate over which we could read: "Work brings freedom." Inside, an orchestra was playing. This was AUSCHWITZ and it appeared that we were expected.

We were lined up in columns of five (a system applied on every conceivable occasion in the camp) and the names of the "newcomers" were once more read out. The man called up had immediately to run over to the one reading the roll and place himself in a line with those already summoned, after having received his number from the hands of an assistant. From this moment on, names were replaced by numbers. This system of "reception" was maintained until the summer of 1943. Later, all the prisoners (with the exception of Germans) had their numbers tattooed on their upper forearms, which had been the practice in the case of the Jews from the beginning. This whole numbering system was apparently applied to lessen the possibility of escape and to make it easier to identify the bodies. These numbers were handed to us by the "block leader" named STUBA, after which we went bareheaded and accompanied by the orchestra into the camp itself. The clock stood at 11 a.m. After a short visit to the "stock" room, we were shut

up in a barrack until 5 p.m. There we were visited by a number of old inmates who earnestly begged us to give them our watches, rings, lighters, and cigarettes to avoid their being confiscated. Any food brought with us should be eaten at once, as it would be taken away as well. In return, the prisoners promised us bread, soup, etc., once we were officially incorporated into their ranks. At last the Capo (a sort of camp overseer) arrived and delivered a short talk in which he stressed that a prisoner could not exist in this camp for more than two months without the help of his comrades; and this was to be confirmed later on by numerous examples. Out of the 60 originally in my group I was to be the only survivor.

At 5 p.m. we were herded out into the corridor. There we had to undress and pack our clothes into bundles provided with our respective numbers. We stood there naked. All we were allowed to keep were a belt and two handkerchiefs. I wanted to keep a small holy picture, but one of the prisoners who acted as assistant in these operations dissuaded me, saying: "It isn't worth while; you will merely be laughed at and it will finally be taken anyway." First, our hair was cut short and then our heads shaved, after which we were given a bath. The water was very warm. All these preparations prior to being admitted as an inmate to the camp took place in "Block 27." Next, although it was snowing, we had to run to "Block 26" where the clothing room was located. There we were issued our prisoner's outfits which consisted of a shirt, underpants, shoes, socks, a warm jacket, trousers, vest, cap, and blanket. Everything was filthy, patched, and practically worn out. My jacket, for instance, could be buttoned up in front, but the back and sleeves merely consisted of black strips of cloth patched together. Finally this operation came to an end and we were again lined up in rows of five and taken to one of the "blocks." There we were awaited by the "block leader" (most of them were Poles from Upper Silesia) who initiated us into the mysteries of barrack duties. We were instructed in sweeping and cleaning the dormitories, in taking off our caps when commanded, and how to keep in line and step. Orders were given in German and when badly carried out the block leader grew furious and struck people right and left. The evening roll call finally put an end to these exercises. The block leader then assembled his people in front of their respective blocks and, in turn, all the block leaders presented their figures to the chief recorder or clerk. If the number of prisoners tallied with the records, the roll call was over; actually the whole tiring ceremony was nothing else but one of the numerous ways in which the prisoners were mistreated. During 1940, 1941, and 1942 the roll call was usually expected to last at least an hour in all weather conditions - frost, rain, or snow - the prisoners having to wait patiently with bare heads. If an escape was reported,

which resulted in a "manco" at evening roll call, all those assembled had to wait outside until the result of the search was known. The search parties usually returned three or four hours later and with disastrous consequences for all the prisoners' health. In 1940, for example, one escape cost the lives of a hundred inmates. It was during severe winter weather and the prisoners were forced to stand out of doors from 3:30 in the afternoon until 11 o'clock the next morning, as a result of which a hundred totally or half-frozen men were counted.

After the roll call we returned to our blocks where we were allotted "rooms;" we slept three to a bed. Old-timers told us that the best thing to do was to use our clothing as a pillow; otherwise something was bound to be stolen. So we lay down without having had the slightest bit of food the whole day. The "reception" had been so strenuous and exhausting that all of us immediately fell asleep.

At 4 a.m. we were awokened by a gong and frightful confusion ensued. About 100 people were compressed into the small hall space and in a wild stampede each one first tried to tidy up his bed (the block leader would not tolerate the smallest wrinkle in the bedding) and dress himself. There was no question of washing. Ten minutes after the gong had sounded the "room eldest" arrived and kicked everyone out into the corridor as the "rooms" had to be cleaned. The corridor was thronged with people who flocked together from all over the block. Most of them had managed to get dressed. There was really scarcely room to move in this crowd and we were pushed against walls and squashed into corners and often kicked or hit for no apparent reason. After having been in the camp for over 24 hours, we finally received some cold, unsweetened coffee, after which there was a further wait of one and one-half hours until roll call; then all the prisoners were taken to work. The newcomers were at first told to fill in questionnaires in which they had to indicate an address where they desired their letters to be sent. It was strictly forbidden not to give an address or not to write, as "they" obviously needed an address to which the death of a prisoner could be reported when the need arose.

Each of us was issued a piece of cloth with a triangle and his number painted on it, which we were instructed to sew on our tunics. Prisoners were numbered from No. 1 onwards, and in November, 1943 the last consecutive serial number had reached 170,000. The triangles in question were of different colors, each representing a category of criminal or prisoner. The "Aryan" triangle was red, the red corresponding to a political prisoner, green to professional criminals, black to "work-shirkers," pink to homosexuals (according to paragraph 175) and

violet to members of the "Bibelforscher" religious sect. In addition, a large letter indicated the nationality of the prisoner, such as "P" for the Poles, etc. For Jews the insignia was composed of a yellow triangle on which was sewn a second triangle whose color corresponded to the "crime," the whole forming a Jewish star. From this marking system one could therefore rapidly pick out, for instance, a Polish Jewish political prisoner or a Jewish "work-slacker," etc.

When we had finished sewing on our triangles and numbers, we were herded over to the "infirmary" where we were to be "examined" by a German doctor regarding our physical aptness for work. Again we had to undress and stand in a chilly corridor for almost three hours, shivering, as the weather was still very cold even at the end of March. We met old acquaintances who were working in the infirmary and their first concern was to have news of their relatives. Upon the doctor's arrival we had to present ourselves in groups, standing stiffly at attention. All that was required of us was to stretch out an arm, move the fingers, turn around and march off. The examination consisted of nothing more and all of us were, of course, considered fit for work. Hadn't we come here for this very purpose and besides, didn't "Work bring freedom?" We knew only too well what it meant to be considered unfit for work: being taken away and condemned to "liquidation" by gas. At last we received our first warm nourishment in 36 hours. The camp food consisted of coffee or cold tea (made from acorn leaves, etc.) in the morning and soup, thick or thin as the case might be, at midday. From the time of our arrival at the camp we had soup made from water and turnips during fully five months. After evening roll call we received 300 grams of bread, although its weight was usually considerably diminished by the time it reached the prisoner. On Mondays and Saturdays, 300 to 400 grams of cheese were distributed. It was some sort of a crude home-made, peasant cheese which often contained more worms than cheese. Rations further included 1/2 kilo of margarine for twelve persons, distributed every Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday, and blood sausage or red sausage on Wednesdays and Mondays. These rations represented approximately 300 to 400 grams. In addition to margarine on Tuesdays and Fridays we also received a spoonful of marmelade per person. Since the barrel, however, bore a label stating that the marmelade was destined for the camp, its quality was correspondingly bad. Theoretically, the above are the rations each inmate received but, practically, a good part of them were stolen before they were actually distributed. In the evening, tea or coffee was distributed with the bread. The soup had to be licked up, as most of the prisoners did not possess spoons. I forgot to mention that we had to eat our food squatting on our haunches as a punishment by the room eldest to us newcomers for having crowded around the soup kettle during distribution.

After our meal we were sent to the identification service where photographs from three different angles were taken. So on that day the camp picture gallery was increased by 60 more criminals! One by one we were called up, and I noticed that my comrades came out of the photographer's room looking frightened. Beware! It was my turn. I was seated on a chair and photographed. When I tried to get up, the floor started moving and, losing my balance, I was thrown against the wall. It was a practical joke played by the photographers, (all of whom are Poles) in setting the revolving platform in motion when one got up. It was not surprising that they sometimes had to have some kind of amusement even at the expense of their camp comrades. We then returned to our quarters and by that time the roll call was again due. So ended our second day in camp; and the next morning we were to be marched off to work with all the other inmates.

All the prisoners had to work except the sick, those in "quarantine," and those confined to their cells. The total camp strength was divided into camp commandos or squads which were each headed by a "Capo," or leader, and several foremen. At the head of large working units was a "Chief Capo" who was assisted by several "Capos" and foremen. The size of one of these squads varied from one to several hundred men. Although the Capo was really in charge, a foreman often took over a group of ten, twenty, or thirty workmen. The head of the labor administration chose the "Capos," with the consent of the "Chief Capo," the prisoners being assigned to squads by the central administration. Work started after the morning roll call, i.e. in summer from 5 a.m. to 12 m. and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., in winter from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. without interruption. There were workshops for craftsmen, farmers, industrial workers, and various technical trades. Many, particularly those in favor, worked in the camp administration. The camp was provided with an "infirmary," a "canteen," a laundry, a bakery, and a slaughter house. Thus prisoners with certain technical training could, in principle, work in their own trades. Intellectuals, liberal professional men, shop keepers, or office workers were the worst off and they represented fully 70 percent of the total number of prisoners. The latter were all employed as unskilled labor in the worst and hardest jobs, such as the coal and gravel pits. The mortality among them was frightfully high. But it seemed to be the aim of the camp administration to kill them off as rapidly as possible.

II. MY FIRST DAYS IN CAMP - THE "INFIRMARY"

My first job was with a demolition squad. Since the area surrounding the camp of AUSCHWITZ had been evacuated for a radius of almost 100 kilometers, all buildings, unless taken over by the camp, had to be torn down. Even new buildings were demolished. Our work consisted in tearing down such houses and was exceedingly strenuous, particularly since we were expected to work at top speed. A squad consisting of 50 men was supposed to demolish a large building within three to four days; and we were instructed to salvage all building material. The roof of a house, for instance, had to be carefully taken down and all planks, beams, tiles, etc., stacked away. Nothing was to be broken; in fact, the slightest damage to anything resulted in an immediate and severe beating with a shovel or pick handle. The walls had to be broken down literally by hand, brick by brick, the cement sticking to each brick being afterwards removed and the bricks piled neatly up. Even the foundations had to be torn out and the ground afterwards levelled so that no trace of the house remained. Many men died at this work, not only from exposure and the strain, but from falling walls and beams - especially those who were elderly or slow. From the 50 who set out in the morning seldom more than 40 returned on their own legs. The remainder were either brought as corpses or in a state of complete collapse in wheelbarrows or on boards. These poor souls still were expected to appear at evening roll call, after which they were taken to the infirmary. From my working comrades who went there I never saw one alive again.

My work with this squad lasted over a month. I was then transferred to the ditch-digging squad. Trenches of from 2 1/2 to 3 meters deep had to be dug, and for the last 50 centimeters we worked standing in water. We were, of course, not allowed to leave the trench during work, and this job was considered as one of the hardest in the camp. Many died at it daily. Some time later I was shifted to the "concrete squad" where I had to heave heavy posts and sacks of cement; but after the arrival of new prisoners I was detailed to the making of concrete bricks. This had the advantage of at least being work under a roof, which was very important inasmuch as work went on regardless of the weather.

In addition, the prisoners were continually mistreated and struck by commando leaders, Capos, and foremen. In general, anyone holding a commanding position in the camp liked to give special emphasis to his position of superiority. Naturally, the character of the person concerned played a considerable role; but the fundamental rule was the direct responsibility of the superior

for his inferiors, each individual being in turn responsible to the collectivity.

These circumstances fostered the "stool pigeon" system. For example, one day a working comrade discovered a few pieces of turnip which he carefully hid. He continued his work but, from time to time, took surreptitious bites off his treasure. Another prisoner having "squealed" on him, the Capo arrived a few minutes later. It must be remembered that the Capo is absolute master of his commando, and that everybody tries to get into his good graces. Unfortunately, this favor often had to be attained to the detriment of the well-being or sometimes even of the lives of other prisoners. The Capo proceeded to search our comrade and, finding the pieces of turnip, knocked the weakened man to the ground, hitting him brutally about the head and face and in the stomach. He then ordered him to sit up, hands outstretched in front of him on the ground with a weight of bricks on each hand; the pieces of turnip were stuck in his mouth. All the men were then assembled and informed that the unfortunate man was to stay in this position for a whole hour. We were warned that this punishment would befall any member of the commando who committed a similar "offense." The condemned man underwent this ordeal guarded by one of the foremen, very eager to fulfill his task to the satisfaction of the Capo, so that he hit our friend every time he tried to shift his position slightly. After 15 to 20 minutes the man became unconscious, but a bucket of water was poured over him and he was again forced into his original position. After he had slumped over senseless for a second time, his body was thrown aside and nobody was allowed to pay further attention to him. After roll call that evening he was taken to the "infirmary" where he died two days later.

Or another example: on Easter Monday, 1942 the weather was extremely bad with a heavy snowfall. We were sitting in the mud scraping cement off bricks, frozen half stiff. Suddenly the Commando Chief appeared and barked the following order: "Discard caps, coats and jackets!" Sick with fear for what might follow, we obeyed and continued working in our shirt sleeves. The Capo sneered at us: "You dirty Poles, now you can celebrate!" A young prisoner, not more than 16 years old, had hidden in a trench. He was terribly thin and so trembling with the cold that he evidently did not hear the order. Or perhaps he didn't care whether he heard it or not. The Capo, however, had meanwhile staggered off (he was half drunk) since he didn't intend to remain out-of-doors in this wretched weather. As a matter of fact, he cared very little about the prisoners; the sooner they died, the better. The snow had stopped falling, but in the cold wind we froze in our shirt sleeves; certain death awaited us. Nobody knew when the Capo might come back, perhaps in a moment,

perhaps in a week, or in a month. While we waited, the snow started to fall again. A few foremen came running in our direction from a stove around which they had been sitting, to see how we are getting on with our work. One of them discovered the hidden youngster and shouted: "All your clothes off, at once, you swine!" As the kid did not react, the foreman pounced on him and started beating him: "Undress or I will beat the life out of you or, better still, I will report you to the chief." At that moment the Capo arrived. A sharp blow of a whistle: "Fall in!" We formed our columns and knew that it meant "sticking together." We were led into an open space where we sank ankle-deep in mud. Now the "sport" started. "Down! Up! Quick march! etc." We literally rolled in the mud. "Flatten out! Jump! Run! Hands out front!" We were covered with mud from head to foot and scarcely able to stand. The "exercise" had now been going on for about half an hour. To finish we had to do "push up" exercises, alternately lying down flat and supporting our bodies on our hands. "Up, Down, Up, Down!" The Chief of the Commando inspected the rows and saw an old man who was unable to continue. Immediately an SS guard threw himself upon him and kicked him in the head and face with heavy hob-nailed boots. When at last the poor old man gave no further sign of life, he was left alone. We were then allowed to stand up and continue with our work. The badly injured man was carried over to a dry spot among piles of bricks. He opened his eyes, tried to say something but couldn't utter a word; and we had to leave him as in the meantime the order was given to resume work. The result was that at the end of the day we carried home another corpse. But we had grown used to it. We marched and sang jolly German songs, as the Capo wanted it to be so. The Commando Chief walked alongside the group; he grinned: "You do sing well!"

During my work in the "concrete squad" I caught pneumonia (as was found out later). At the beginning I avoided the "infirmary" and hoped I would get over it. I knew too well what happened there and that seldom one left the place alive. But I became so weak that I could hardly move, and finally had to give in. I became completely indifferent. In one way I was lucky that my friends in the "infirmary" took care of me so that I was then able to enjoy "privileged" conditions. When I entered the "Krankenbau" it was composed of three different buildings: Block 28 - internal illnesses -, Block 20 - infectious illnesses -, Block 21 - surgery. Later on three new "blocks" (Blocks 19, 9, and 10) were attached to the "infirmary." They composed the so-called "Hygiene Institute." Here, sterilizing by X-ray treatment, artificial insemination of women, as well as experiments on blood transfusions were carried on. Male and female prisoners, especially Jews, served as "guinea pigs" for these experiments. This "block" was completely isolated from the rest of the camp so that news from it reached us only very seldom.

It was not easy to be admitted to the "infirmary," as the "minimum" symptom was a fever of from 38.6 to 39 degrees (C). Light cases of fever were not admitted. All applications for transfer to the "infirmary" had to be submitted to the chief of one's own "block," who had the right to reject any such request. Then the sick person had to wait for hours in the courtyard of the "infirmary" before being called in for preliminary examination. If the doctor (a prisoner) considered him worth treating, he had to undress and usually take a cold bath before being presented to the German doctor, after further long hours of waiting. The sick were classified into two groups, "Aryans" and Jews. These groups were again subdivided into further groups, of which the first included the sick who were to remain in hospital, being considered "curable." The second consisted of extremely run down patients, chronic cases, and the half-starving or mutilated whose recovery could only be effected by a long stay in the hospital. This group was practically condemned to death by phenol injections in the heart region. Racial considerations played an important role. An "Aryan" really had to be seriously ill to be condemned to death by injection, whereas 80 to 90 percent of the Jews "hospitalized" there were "eliminated" in this manner. Many of them knew about this method and applied for admission as so-called "suicide candidates," not having the courage to throw themselves on to the high tension wires.

This situation lasted during the whole of 1942 until the time the mass extermination of interned Jews at AUSCHWITZ began. Danger of death by injection did not only threaten the newly-arrived hospital cases or casualties. From time to time (usually once a month) the German doctor used to effect a minute control of all the sick. In each ward an attendant (usually a doctor) had to "present" each patient and give full account of his illness. If the patient's stay happened to have exceeded a month, or if he were very weak, he was listed. The German doctor always kept the sick records of the condemned so as to avoid any attempt at interference on the part of the prisoners themselves. Each such special check-up by the German doctor usually resulted in a list of 200 to 400 men condemned to death, while the "normal" death list of the daily routine inspection varied from 20 to 80. The injections were given on the same day. The new patients who were booked for the "syringe" (as it was called in the camp jargon) received no clothes and had to remain waiting in the corridor - naked. They were then led from Block 28 to Block 20 where the "operation" took place in a special room. An SS man by the name of KLER, a shoemaker by profession, gave the injections. He had taken up this post in the hospital as a simple SS private, but was later promoted to SS "group leader," although practically a moron. He also

received supplementary food rations and was awarded the Iron Cross. There were days when this psychopath picked out victims from the wards on his own initiative, without instructions from the German doctor, on whom to practice his "technique." He was a complete sadist, torturing his victims with animal-like brutality before putting them to death. Later it was decided that his nerves had been strained by "overwork" so an "assistant" was recruited, a Polish volunteer, by the name of PANSZCZYK, No. 607 from Cracow, who was transferred to Germany during the winter of 1942 where he presumably died. The injections were then sporadically administered by "Sanitätsdienstgehilfen," or given by the chief of the "infirmary." For a certain time, another Pole named JERZY SZYMKOWIAK, No. 15490, "functioned" voluntarily; he died in the summer of 1943.

The injections were not only administered to the weak and ill, but also to prisoners in the political section who were condemned to death. Apart from this, on one occasion, two groups (the first composed of 40, the second of 80 prisoners) of young and strong youths between the ages of 13 and 16 years were put to death, on the ground that they were "orphans" and could not be considered in the camp as full-fledged workers.

In the autumn of 1942 came the massacre of the LUBLIN transports which caused great unrest in the camp. One of the sanitary service attendants refused to administer injections, stating that he was an SS man and not a murderer of children. Another attendant had to be summoned to carry out the job. This affair caused a lot of talk and stir as at least 15,000 to 20,000 people lost their lives and even BERLIN asked for an explanation of the high mortality rate in the hospital. The head-doctor, WIRTZ, disclaimed all knowledge of such events and laid the blame on the camp doctor whose name was ENTREST, a German from the POSEN district. A mock inquiry was held at which witnesses from the hospital administration had to testify and the lists of the "deceased" were checked. As "punishment" the camp doctor was simply transferred in the same capacity to the "BUNA." As a result of all this, murdering by means of injections stopped for a while, although it was resumed on a smaller scale soon afterwards for hopelessly sick cases. Many of those condemned to the "syringe" were used as experimental material in the "Hygiene Institute" (Block 10). The injections doubtlessly frightened the prisoners from asking to be admitted to the hospital.

Another major danger in the camp was "delousing," as it was euphemistically called. The whole camp obviously was covered with lice and fleas and large disinfection programs were carried out. However, the results were never apparent and our "washing" always came back almost as full of lice. Actually, the "delousing" was

designed to combat typhus epidemics which had become a real plague at the camp. During these actions everybody was examined and those with bad complexions or in weakened bodily condition were, according to the camp doctor's mood, destined to be gassed. They were simply led to the "infirmary" from where 40 to 50 percent were "evacuated." A "delousing" action which took a particularly large toll in victims was conducted in July, 1942. During the course of this "purge" the weak, those ill with typhus or in post-typhus quarantine, were all sent to BRZINSKI without exception. This method was considered the most radical for eliminating typhus. The way in which those condemned to the gas chambers were transferred to their doom was exceptionally brutal and inhuman. Serious cases from the surgical ward who still had their bandages on, and a procession of exhausted and horribly emaciated patients, even convalescents on the road to recovery, were loaded on to trucks. They were all naked and the spectacle was dreadful in the extreme. The trucks pulled up at the entrance of the block and the unfortunate victims were simply thrown or piled on by the attendants (I frequently witnessed such tragic transports). A hundred people were often jammed into a small truck. They all knew exactly what their fate was to be. The large majority remained completely apathetic while others, mostly patients from the surgery with bloody and gaping wounds or frightful sores, struggled frantically. All around the trucks SS men milled about like madmen, beating back the howling crowd trying to lean out. Every time it was a terrible experience to have to drag our friends to the truck. Most of them were quiet and bid us farewell, but never forgot to remind us: "Do not forget revenge." Under such conditions men's hearts turn to stone. Imagine a prisoner's killing his brother in one of the wards so as to avoid his having to undergo the dreadful trip by truck. (I happen to know the names and immatriculation numbers of these two particular prisoners). It can well be imagined that we just shrugged our shoulders when told the German fairy tales regarding the KATYN incident.

III. THE JEWS

Originally, the camp of AUSCHWITZ was intended only for Poles. It was guarded by a group of Germans (no more than 30 at the beginning) who had been transferred from a German concentration camp. They were prisoners as well but "camp veterans," if such an expression may be used. Most of them had been imprisoned as far back as 1934 and were all more or less professional criminals. But as time went on AUSCHWITZ became more and more of an international camp and the first Jews started to arrive in 1941. They were immediately separated from the "Aryans" and quartered in special "blocks." Although at the time systematic executions were

not an established rule, it can be stated that as a result of bad treatment by SS men, Capos and foremen (the majority of German origin but often Poles who were enlisted by force), a Jew - irrespective of his physical condition - could not last more than two weeks. A young Jew, for instance, who was robust enough to be able to do his work "on the double" (for example pushing a heavily laden wheelbarrow) would most probably be unable to keep it up in the long run. If he should show signs of holding out, he would inevitably be killed sooner or later by such mistreatment as being beaten with a shovel or pick handle.

In those days all the Jews had to work in the "quarry squad." At a trot they had to bring gravel on wheelbarrows from a pit about 15 to 20 meters deep up a steep slope. At the top, SS men and Capos checked their work and the speed at which it was carried out, and anyone considered as "loafing" was simply pushed over backwards when he arrived at the top so that he crashed back down the incline with his fully laden barrow. This was one of the guards' favourite pastimes. Such treatment of Jewish prisoners prevailed from the time the first Jews arrived at the camp until the spring of 1942, when the first large transports of Jews (tens of thousands) began to arrive and the extermination campaign was getting underway. At first there were few Jews at the camp, most of them of Polish origin, who had been sent there along with other Poles. They were immediately separated from the latter. They had been arrested not as a consequence of their being Jewish, but for offenses directed against "the security of the German State." Only from the spring of 1942 on were they rounded up and exterminated "en masse" on racial grounds. Certain large scale preparations had to be made to receive these mass transports and a special concentration camp was opened at BIRKENAU (the Polish name of the village is RAJSKO). Administered by Germans and Poles, the camp was guarded by SS detachments. Conditions were appalling. The camp had no water, no drainage system, and not even the most elementary hygienic installations. The Jews remained in civilian clothes which were marked with red paint. Food was supposed to be distributed to them on a basis similar to that prevailing in AUSCHWITZ, but abuse was flagrant. It often happened that the inmates received nothing to eat for days and then only a small part of the rations they should have had. Altogether they were inhumanly treated. The slightest complaint was punishable by death.

The first large convoys arrived from France and Slovakia. Physically able men and women - those without children or the mothers of grownup children - were sent to the camp of BIRKENAU. The remainder, i.e. old or weak men, women with

small children, and all those unfit for labour, were taken to the Birch Wood (BRZEZINKI) and killed by means of hydrocyanic gas. For this purpose special gassing barracks had been built there. These consisted of large halls, airtight, and provided with ventilators which could be opened or closed according to the need. Inside they were equipped so as to create the impression of bathing establishments. This was done to deceive the victims and make them more manageable. The executions took place as follows: each death convoy consisted of some 8 to 10 trucks packed with the "selectees;" the convoy was unguarded as the whole frightful drama took place on camp territory. A private car containing the camp doctor followed each truck convoy since it was compulsory for him to be present at these mass executions. On their arrival at the gassing establishment, which was surrounded by a double barbed wire fence, men, women, and children had to completely undress. Each of them was given a towel and a piece of soap. Then they were driven into the barrack until it was completely filled up. Everything was hermetically closed, and specially trained SS units threw hydrocyanic bombs through the ventilation openings. After about ten minutes the doors were opened, and a special squad composed exclusively of Jews had to clear away the bodies and prepare for a new group of "selectees." The crematoria had not yet been constructed, although there was a small one at AUSCHWITZ which, however, was not employed for burning these bodies. Mass graves were dug at that time into which the corpses were simply thrown. This continued into the autumn of 1942. By this time extermination by gas was being intensified and there was no more time even for such summary burial. Row upon row of bodies of murdered Jews, covered only by a thin layer of earth, were widely dispersed in the surrounding fields, causing the soil to become almost marshy through the putrefaction of the bodies. The smell emanating from these fields became intolerable. In the autumn of 1942 all that remained of the bodies had to be exhumed and the bones collected and burned in the crematoria (by that time four had been completed). An alternative was to gather the remains of the unfortunate victims into heaps, pour gasoline over them, and leave it to the flames to finish the tragedy. The immense quantity of human ashes thus collected was carted away in every direction to be scattered over the fields where these martyrs had found their last rest.

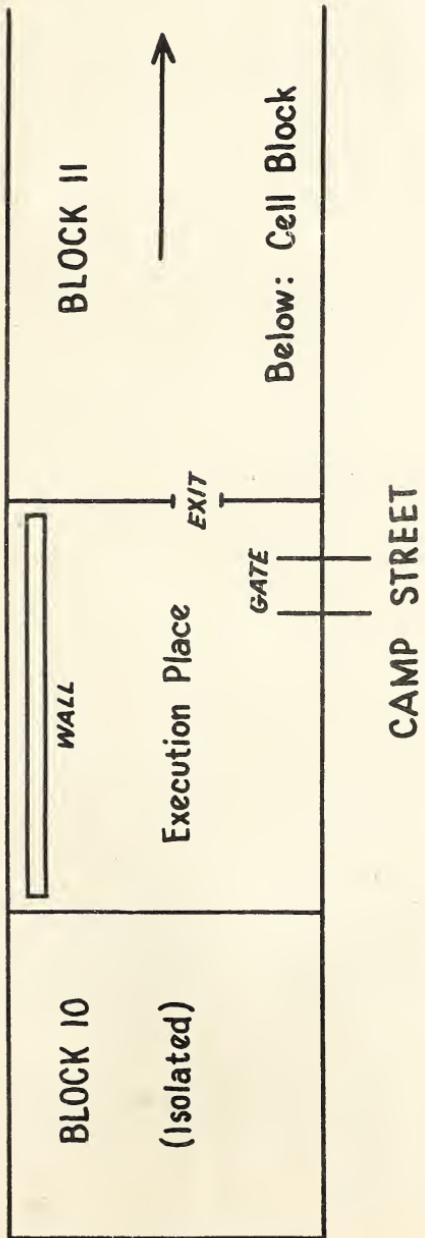
In the meantime, the crematoria had been finished and the number of arrivals was steadily increasing. Gassing and burning were carried out at record speed but the supply of corpses became so large that occasionally they had to resort to the old method of open air cremation. It is estimated that approximately 1 1/2 million Jews were exterminated in this manner. With the exception of the Polish Jews, the other Jews had no idea what was in store for them at AUSCHWITZ. We were told by Dutch and

French Jews that the Germans had informed them that they were leaving their country to be transferred to Poland where everyone would be able to continue work in his own profession or, still better, where for each shop, concern, or factory seized by the Germans an equivalent source of livelihood would be put at their disposal. They were to take their whole fortunes with them and liquid cash for at least six weeks. This resulted in considerable amounts of money and valuables being brought to AUSCHWITZ (most of them by Dutch bankers and diamond merchants), most of which was stolen by the camp staff, SS men, and prisoners. The condemned Jews generally faced their fate calmly, although those arriving in 1943 had a clearer idea of what awaited them. The sporadic attempts at rebellion and mass escape, when the freight cars were unloaded upon arrival, were bloodily repelled. The special railway siding reserved for the convoys was surrounded by searchlight and machine gun posts. On one occasion these unfortunate people scored a small success. It must have been during September or October, 1943 after a transport of women had arrived. The accompanying SS men had ordered them to undress and were about to drive them into the gas chamber. This moment was always used by the guards as a good opportunity for looting, and rings and wrist watches were torn off women's fingers and arms. In the confusion resulting from one such attack, one woman managed to snatch the pistol of SS Groupleader SCHILLINGER and fire three shots at him. He was seriously wounded and died the next day. This gave the signal for the others to attack the executioners and their henchmen. One SS man had his nose torn off, another was scalped, but unfortunately none of the women was able to escape. Although an attempt was made to keep this incident secret, it resulted in an order's being issued whereby SS men were not allowed to remain in camp after 8 p.m.

The extermination of Jews continued relentlessly, although in the camp tension relaxed to a certain extent. The fate of those Jews admitted to the camp has been described in the sections of my report dealing with the gassing and killing of the ill by means of injections.

IV. EXECUTIONS

Until the summer of 1941 AUSCHWITZ was mainly a concentration camp in which no executions had taken place so far. The first executions came as a surprise for the majority of the camp's inmates. They began in the summer of 1941 when one evening after roll call, various numbers were called up (I well remember there were 18 men from Cracow alone). The men whose numbers had been called were ordered to the stock room, where they had to give up



their clothes and were given old rags (a shirt and pants) in exchange. Then they were taken to the gravel pit and shot with pistols at point blank range. The other prisoners were not allowed to be present at the shooting, but the execution was so arranged that practically the whole camp could witness the proceedings. After the execution a special commando was designated to bury the bodies. This incident caused a great deal of unrest within the camp, as we had assumed until then that deportation to a concentration camp excluded the death penalty for offences against the security of the German State. From this day on executions were carried out at more or less regular intervals, the victims being called up on Tuesdays and Fridays. Later a special place of execution was set up within the camp's boundary, an open space between "Blocks 10 and 11" where executions took place generally in the morning.

The index cards of the condemned men were sent from the chief clerk's office to the respective "blocks" and in the morning, immediately after roll call, the numbers of the prisoners were called up by the "block recorder." If the index card bore the inscription "to report immediately after roll call" and the signature of the "recording clerk," it meant that the prisoner called up was to be shot. The "block recorder" assembled the victims and brought them over to the chief clerk's office. There the numbers, names, and dates of birth were checked again. Ordered into rows of five by the camp eldest and the block eldest (also prisoners), they were then marched to the place of execution. If the shooting was only to take place a few hours later, the men were locked up in cells. If the execution, however, was to be carried out at once they were taken first to the washhouse. They undressed and their numbers were marked on their thighs with indelible pencil. After these preparations, they were again lined up in fives and then sent out to the execution wall (first four men and then two at a time). The men were led out by the block eldest of "Block 11" or then by the Capo of the cell block (a Jew), who took hold of the hands of the condemned and dragged them out to the wall where he stood between the two. In the beginning the condemned were forced to kneel and bend their heads forward, but later they were usually shot standing. The executioners shot their victims in the back of the head with a short-barrelled rifle which made a muffled report.

After the execution the "body bearers" went into action and removed the corpses to a nearby stable where they were thrown on a heap of straw. The blood stains were removed and the emplacement prepared for the execution of two further victims. After the whole group had been liquidated, the bodies were kept in "Block 28" until the evening. At dusk all the bodies, including those of other prisoners deceased during the same day, were

piled on to a big cart and pulled to the crematoria. Later, the corpses were also removed from the place of execution in coffins and, if a considerable number were involved, a truck was used for this purpose. These "death transports" always took place during hours of curfew, as the camp authorities wished to keep the executions as secret as possible, in which they were, however, not particularly successful.

As mentioned before, such executions started during the summer of 1941 and reached a peak in 1942 with the transfer of "disciplinary companies" from AUSCHWITZ to RAJSKO (BIRKENAU) towards the end of May, 1942. Together with a large group of "Muselmänner" ("Muselmann" was a term applied in camp jargon to convicts utterly exhausted by starvation or over work) many young and sturdy men were selected and drafted into these "disciplinary companies." They were all marked with a large red dot, as in these special groups the inmates were differentiated by red dots on their chests and backs for offences committed in civil life and by black circles for "crimes" committed in the camp itself. Such "companies" were made up of about 500 men of whom, every second day, 10 to 15 were shot. The rest of them had to work extremely hard and await their turn. At the same time mass executions started in AUSCHWITZ (middle of May, 1942). Once, twice, or three times a week, 40 to 60 men were simply picked out and shot. Restlessness increased in the camp, when by the middle of June the situation had not changed, to a point approaching open rebellion, especially after one mass execution which cost the lives of 120 prisoners. The camp administration apparently got wind of this and, during a roll call sometime in June, it was announced that executions would cease and the death penalty would be abolished. It was true that the prisoners reacted with deep distrust, but on the whole the news had a quieting effect on everybody. And, in fact, there was a pause of 1 to 1 1/2 months after which executions began again, although less often and only in small groups. This state of affairs continued until October, 1942 when one of the largest mass executions ever held took 247 victims, all Poles from the LUBLIN and POŁHALA districts. Terror broke out in the camp as a result, although again many reacted with complete apathy. This ended a ghastly series of executions of prisoners who, upon arrival in the camp, were already condemned to death. But some of them had been in camp over a year without knowing that their fate was already sealed. If often happened, for instance, that a prisoner selected for execution would be lying ill in the hospital but, as the sentence had to be carried out, he received a deadly injection in his bed. The famous Polish actor Witold ZACHAREWICZ was murdered in this way.

All this, of course, did not mean that October, 1942 saw the end of the execution of prisoners brought to AUSCHWITZ with death warrants already signed. Only the method underwent certain changes. In the early days, for instance, the Aryan prisoners had always been given numbers and then incorporated into the camp. Later a new method was evolved consisting in immediately dividing the newcomers into two groups: those condemned to death and those who were to remain as regular inmates. The first group was not allotted serial numbers but directly transferred from the "block leader's" central office to the cells in "Block 11." The executions took place there and the arrivals were either shot at once or a few days later. This procedure was adopted in an attempt to keep the whole matter secret, and executions were only carried out late at night. In addition, the camp inmates were led to believe that only "civilians" were submitted to this radical treatment (it must be stated that only a permanent camp inmate was considered a "prisoner," whereas newcomers, without numbers and who had not yet joined the ranks, were still designated as "civilians"). So as long as only "civilians" were executed the regular inmates were not particularly upset.

Executions of "prisoners," however, did not cease altogether. The camp administration was extremely severe regarding discipline and respect of camp rules. For the slightest omission one was marched off to the execution cells and, of course, never returned. Things became even worse when the political section (meaning the camp Gestapo) decided to take charge of the punishment of petty internal offences. The frequent result was that they decided questions of life and death according to their own judgment. Bribery became the order of the day. Among the "offences" for being locked up in the execution cells were: being "politically suspect" on the grounds of having contacted "civilians" in the camp, spreading political news or commenting on the German High Command's communiquees, drunkenness, theft (foodstuffs, gold, precious stones), premeditated escape, etc. The death cells were always overcrowded and every now and then they had to be "evacuated." This took place as follows: the camp leader, chief of the political section, GRABNER by name, dashed in, accompanied by a number of SS men as drunk as himself. They went from cell to cell, taking down the particulars of each occupant's case, the reason for his punishment, etc. If the camp leader had a list of those condemned to death in hand, the prisoners could consider themselves lucky, inasmuch as it might not yet be their turn. But usually no notice was taken of such a list. What decided the individual prisoner's fate was mainly the impression he made on this gang of drunkards and the mood in which the camp leader happened to be. There was no question of considering the actual penalty. If the impression he made was not too unfavourable, the prisoner remained in his cell to await his execution at a later date unless he went to his death voluntarily. The whole

inspection was accompanied by a great deal of vile language and brutal treatment. Usually 85 to 90 percent of the death cell occupants were "evacuated" and shot in front of the wall so that space was again available for new arrivals. The camp in general was, of course, never informed of this secret justice nor who were its victims. It is true that the relatives of the victims were duly informed, but the cause of death was always given as being "natural." An incredible amount of paper was wasted compiling fake records of illnesses, fever charts, etc., destined to justify each single death. Death announcements were telegraphed never more than at the rate of two a day so as not to arouse suspicion on the "outside." From the beginning the executions were carried out by a single man: first, by "Oberscharführer" PALITSCH, who was later sent to an officers' training center, and then by "Scharführer" STIWETZ, who still performs these duties. Executions of women were reported from AUSCHWITZ, but in small numbers. On the other hand, great numbers of people were shot after having been brought in by truck straight from freedom or from prisons. In two instances whole families were executed, parents together with their children. In one case, an infant a few months old ended his short life in the arms of his mother before the execution wall.

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